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No. 157.

A "FISH STORY."

Put into rhyme.

BY HAP HAZARD.

A village grocer, in days of yore,
Hung out a gaudy cod beside his door,
And wrote beneath its name of his stock,
"Codfish for sale here, cheap for cash," with chalk.
"For cash!" a rustic cried. "Faith! none so green
To look for credit at thy store, I ween!
The prudent grocer knowing wagged his head,
And to his boy, 'Rub out 'for cash,' he said.
Another, passing, muttered with a sneer,
"Not 'cheaper' than thy neighbor Tomkins' near,
To use such chaff for bait is cunning deep."
The grocer cried: "Hallo! Sam, rub out 'cheap.'"
"Where, if not 'here'?" a clown asked, with a grin.
"True,"—and the grocer, thoughtful, scratched his chin.
"No fool would advertise what's sold across
The way. Sam, rub out 'here'—and no great loss."
Another roared with mirth. "Ha! ha! 'for sale!'
You'll never be hanged for giving, I'll go bail!"
Rub out, 'for sale,' Sam; there's no need to say
Such words as them ain't picked up without pay."
A fifth wag held his nose. "'Codfish'" quoth he,
"What booby couldn't tell what them things be?"
One's nose would amble warning give without—
"Hallo there, Sam—be sure you rub 'codfish' out."
Now on the doorstep hangs the codfish stark,
Nor from the passer-by calls forth remark;
All undisturbed, the grocer steals a nap,
While Sam sits, whittling, in Contentment's lap.

The Beautiful Forger:

OR,
THE ADVENTURES OF A YOUNG GIRL.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLETT.

AUTHOR OF "MADEIRINE'S MARRIAGE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DOUBT VISITATION.

THE late moon had not risen, and the darkness was intense, when the three drew up in front of the house. It was the design of Querodos to capture the physician and carry him off as quietly as possible.

Once his prisoner, he could intimidate him so completely as to compel him to discover the hiding-place of his gold. It was customary at that period for temporary residents, who could not gain a livelihood from the soil, to conceal their money and use it as they needed.

The man placed his two assistants on different sides of the house to watch, and went himself to reconnoiter. All was silent; but a light was burning in the library. A single wrench of a steel instrument loosened the window, which the outlaw raised as softly as possible, though not without noise enough to startle the late student.

As the doctor sprang to his feet to confront the intruder, the latter gave a low whistle that instantly brought his confederates to his aid. At the same instant he leaped in at the window, seized Dr. Merle in his arms, and endeavored to force him out.

The surprised prisoner gave a scream, but his voice was instantly muffled by the cloak thrown over his head. Then, with the assistance of the two men, Querodos got him out of the window, overturning the light in the confusion.

Dragging his captive out of the gate, he managed to gag and bind him, with the help of the others, and flung him across the front of his saddle. Then, leaping on the horse's back, he gave the animal a savage blow with his whip, and the three galloped away.

The abduction had not been accomplished without noise enough to awaken the old housekeeper, Margaret. She started up and ran to the window, just in time to catch a glimpse of the shadowy figures of the men as they sprang on horseback. Then she heard the quick tramp of their horses' feet.

It was a minute's work to strike a light, and she went down-stairs. A glance at the library was enough to show her what had happened.

She went quietly into an outhouse used as a bedroom by the doctor's assistant. He was sleeping heavily on a trundle-bed, pulled in front of the expiring embers in the fireplace.

"Wake, Ulric!" the woman hissed in his ear. "Wake instantly!"

She pushed him, and he started up, fully awake in a second. He was dressed, except the coat he had flung off.

"Some robbers have broken into the house, and carried off the master!" the woman whispered, hurriedly—her face pale with terror.

"What? Robbers?" exclaimed Ulric.

"Hush! You must not awake Helen. She must know nothing of it. Put on your coat this moment—and go out."

"Which way did they go?"

"How can I tell? You must find out, and go after them; and if you can not overtake them, you must give the alarm in the rancheria—and send soldiers out from the fort."

She followed the assistant to the door.

"Quick—you can ride quickly! Here is the key of the stable." She took it from the nail to give him.

As Ulric went out, she closed and fastened the door. Then she returned to the library, picked up the overturned things, shut the window, and went softly up-stairs.

Setting down the lamp in her own room, she passed noiselessly into that of the sleeping maid.

Helen was slumbering sweetly; her golden hair straying over her flushed cheek, and one of her soft, round arms thrown over her head.

"She has not been disturbed—poor lamb!" breathed the nurse, and with a sigh of thankfulness, she retired to her own bed.

Ulric went into the stable, his dark face distorted by a grin of satisfaction.

"The woman has got him!" he muttered, to himself. "I thought she would pay him for the trick he played on her! Let her keep him; I shall not meddle with her again! It is time for me to put my own schemes in practice!"

He climbed into the hay-loft, and threw himself upon the soft bed, having first locked the door.

"Take care of your mistress, good Margaret,"



He touched his knife significantly, conveying a threat he thought would be effectual in unlocking her lips.

he muttered, with another laugh. "I will have my sleep out here."

Ulric left the house before daybreak on horseback, and was absent several hours. It was long past noon when he returned.

He bore a note, hurriedly scrawled in pencil, and signed with Dr. Merle's name, addressed to his daughter. He had been carried off—it said—by robbers; but had been as strangely rescued by friendly hands; he would give her all the particulars when they met. He sent Ulric to bring her to him, with his papers and a chest which he could not leave to become the prey of marauders. Margaret was to stay in the house and see that it was not molested. The ruffians would not trouble her when once satisfied that they could gain no booty.

Helen declared her readiness to go to her father; but that she would not go without Margaret. She clung to her old nurse, she entreated that they might not be parted.

The good old woman was deeply affected by her emotion; but she saw many reasons why it was better for herself to remain, at least till Ulric's return. The laboratory was full of chemical instruments, and vials of costly medicine; the books, if destroyed, could not be replaced. She would guard these, she said, by keeping the house well fastened; she would meet any intruders; she would show them that neither plate nor money remained to tempt their cupidity.

In a few days she would follow her pet—her darling—and stay with her till they could all return home, or leave this dangerous country. Why could not Ulric tell where he had left the master?

Because he had been sworn to silence—the half-breed replied. The farmer who had given the doctor shelter had no wish to be subjected to the descent of Mexican bandits, such as were reported to have come down from their fastness in the mountains, to rob every house where gold was supposed to have been concealed. No doubt some of those ruffians had knowledge of the probability that Dr. Merle owned some amount of treasure, and had captured him to compel him, if possible, to reveal its hiding-place.

Helen refused to be convinced or persuaded to leave her beloved nurse. No argument had the slightest effect on her till Ulric told her that her father had been wounded in the scuffle with

his assailants, and lay in a condition requiring her aid.

Then she consented to go, after Ulric had promised to return directly for Margaret as soon as she was safe with her father.

He had brought out another horse with his own, and he put Helen's side-saddle on the one she commonly rode. Then he produced from the cellar a black box of stout plank girded with iron bands, and very heavy. This he strapped on the front of the horse rode by himself.

Helen's changes of dress were made into a parcel, and tied in front of her saddle.

She embraced Margaret with many tears, and rode forth with the doctor's assistant full of hope, and yet anxious for her father's safety.

Ulric whispered to the housekeeper.

"If they come again to-night, let them go in to the cellar. They will see that the money-box has been taken away, and will leave you when they can get nothing."

It was late in the afternoon when they departed. Margaret watched them out of sight with many forebodings of disaster; then went into the house and set every thing in order. She could eat nothing, and retired early, not taking off her dress, and leaving a lamp burning. She had just dropped into a doze when a noise below startled her; and stealing to the door and opening it, she saw a lantern, from which light flickered, and two men ascending the stairs. One of them carried the lantern.

Alarmed as she was, Margaret did not lose her presence of mind. Her first thought was thankfulness that Helen had not stayed to be terrified by these midnight intruders.

She took up her lamp, threw the door open, and at once faced the men, who were preparing to force an entrance.

Their faces were muffled so as to be seen only partially; but their black, bushy brows and sal-low complexions showed them to be of the race of Mexico-Spaniards, to which belonged so many of the herdsmen, and even the rancheros or farmers. They wore the ordinary garb of the herdsmen—called *agueros*—and were armed with knives in the belt and horse-pistols slung over the shoulder.

Margaret demanded what they wanted in a voice that trembled in spite of herself.

"The money," was the prompt reply. The men belonged to the robber-band of Querodos, and disappointed at the failure of their chief to

secure the doctor's gold, they had come for it.

"Where is the master?" asked the woman.

With impatient oaths the intruders bade her to be silent, and lose no time in showing them where the treasure of her master was hid.

"I think—I am sure—she answered, 'that there is no money about the house.'"

The men burst out laughing. "Dr. Merle—the man who transmitted metals! Why, he could make every thing he touched turn to gold!" they exclaimed. "He had piles of it somewhere, and they would find it," with a volley of oaths. "The old woman would not be harmed if she would act on the square; but if she dared try a trick—" The man who spoke touched his knife significantly, conveying a threat he thought would be effectual in unlocking her lips.

The housekeeper replied that she had never meddled with her master's business, nor inquired where he kept his gold. If it was in the house they would find it. She was ready to show them the rooms. They followed her in haste. They rummaged the library, overturned the books, and pried open the cabinet and several drawers. Nothing but "rubbish" rewarded their search. The same in the parlor, bedrooms and kitchen. The horrible profanity with which they vented their disappointment, shocked the listener, but she was compelled to do their bidding.

Presently they ordered her to set out some refreshments.

Margaret placed bread and cold meat on the table, with a decanter containing some brandy.

The ruffians drank this eagerly, and called for more liquor.

Margaret said she would fetch some more from the cellar.

The cellar! They had not thought of that hiding-place! What more likely than that the money was buried there? They followed her eagerly, and searched through the entire under-part of the house, which was spacious and well-lighted in security.

"What's this?" demanded one, tapping a cask in one corner, and shoving it out with his foot. It was too light to contain gold.

"That is gunpowder," replied the old woman, calmly.

They had found the liquor first, and had satiated their greed of it by repeated draughts.

The effect was obvious. Neither one of the robbers was sober. But they were no less determined to find the gold; and their threats in case of failure became appalling.

Both declared that they would leave a candle sticking in the gunpowder to blow up the house and the woman with it. They had wrenched off the top of the cask, and thrust in the end of an unlighted candle.

Margaret gave up all hope of saving her master's home. She thought now only of her own escape. Watching her opportunity, she moved stealthily to the door, ready to run up the steps leading outside. She had undrawn the bolts, and thrown back the door of the outside entrance, when she felt her gown seized, and a rough clutch laid on her arm.

It was one of the robbers, and he dragged her down the steps, cursing her vehemently in his drunken rage.

The other gave a cry of surprise; he had discovered the hole from which Ulric had disinterred the black box!

The earth freshly dug up; the vacant space—
—all told the story.

The money-box had been removed.

Who had done it, and where was it taken? Margaret was unable to tell. She had never known where her master kept his treasure; she had never cared to know. She could not answer by giving any information.

To their questions as to who had left the house since the preceding night, she would give no reply. She was determined not to inform them of Ulric and Helen's journey. If she did they might pursue and overtake them.

It was plain to the robbers that some one had taken the spoil away. But who? Querodos and Pedro, with the Indian lad, had brought nothing to head-quarters; and the chief had given them leave to fetch away what they could find. His prisoner was safe enough.

Who had discovered their intention and forestalled them? It must be some one in the doctor's interest.

Neither persuasions nor menaces could induce Margaret to give information.

After a fruitless search, the robbers decided to go away, as their prize had been carried off.

But, the woman's obstinacy should be punished. One of them seized and held her, while the other tied her hands and feet with pieces of rope lying on the ground. Then they dragged her into a remote corner of the cellar, and seated her so that she could lean against the damp wall, all the time heaping abuse on her for the refusal to answer their questions.

She did not ask mercy from her half-drunken foes. She closed her lips firmly, and prayed earnestly in her heart that the sacrifice of her life might not be in vain, but that the girl she loved with a mother's tenderness might be shielded from misfortune.

"Give her a chance!" cried one of her brutal enemies. "The gunpowder is far enough off to blow the roof off without shattering this side of the building, and she may see daylight without stirring."

"Once more," said his companion, "I offer you life and liberty, if you will tell us who carried off the money, and where to find it."

"I will not," she answered. "You can murder me, but you will lose what you came for."

"Then away with us—Joe!" he cried with a string of fierce oaths. "I will open the door; do you light the candle, and we will make a run for it."

He took up the lantern, crept up the stone steps, and threw open the door, which opened into the little garden. A rush of cold air swept over them all as the door swung open.

"Come quick—Joe—don't you be caught!" he called from outside. The other lighted the candle inserted in the cask of powder.

"Say your prayers, good wench!" he called to Margaret, laughing as he went up the steps, and adding more oaths.

She heard him throw the door to, and draw the bar across it outside. The distant sound of their leaving laughter came to her ears.

A prisoner—with a frightful death in immediate prospect! Margaret felt the vitality of her frame return in force to resist the fate to which she was doomed. She struggled against her bonds; she strove to gnaw the rope that tied her wrists; in vain! The cruel cords cut into her flesh, but she could not move them, nor could she slip her feet from the manacles.

Suddenly a bright thought occurred to her.

CHAPTER VIII.

LED INTO THE TOILS.

DARKNESS overtook Helen, riding under the guidance of Ulric, before they had gone half the way—as he said—to the place of destination. They had left the plain behind them, crossed a ferry, and entered a wooded country, where they met occasionally half-breeds and Indians, and one or two white horsemen wearing high-crowned hats, with the usual black glazed covering trimmed with gold band and bell buttons, and the hunting-shirt fastened at the waist with blue or red sash, commonly inclosing a brace of pistols.

As the dusk closed in, they reached an elevated ridge, from which Helen could see a clear river in the distance curving at the base of precipitous hills.

Mountains, far beyond, rose in piles, one above another, each summit more blue and misty as it receded. At the left, long spaces of white sand bordered extensive marshes.

At any other time Helen's artistic taste would have been delighted with the beauty of the landscape picture. But she was nervous and frightened. Learning from her attendant that they would have to cross the river, and that hours must pass before they could reach the place they were bound for, she asked if they could nowhere obtain shelter till the moon rose, or till daybreak.

Ulric answered that he knew of a small ranch, or rather a farm-house, near the water, where the herdsmen stopped for meals, and where she could no doubt obtain accommodation for the night.

"Let us go there!" entreated the girl.

am very tired, and afraid of losing our way in the darkness."

"And I am hungry," added the half-breed. "Come, then!" He lightly touched Helen's horse with his whip, and they rode on at a brisk pace. They found the rustic cabin in the midst of a clump of live-oaks.

An old man was busy splitting wood. Helen addressed him, and asked if she could stop at his house for the night.

He called to an elderly woman who had just carried a pail of milk into the hut. She came out, dressed in a short gown of black stuff and an apron of brown linen. Helen looked at the sight of the young lady and her odd-looking attendant seemed at first to overpower her. But she soon found her tongue, and poured out a torrent of questions.

Helen told her story, and the good woman's sympathies were immediately enlisted. Certainly, she could stay all night. She assisted the young girl to dismount, carried her parcel into the hut, placed her in a willow chair, and replenished the fire, while Ulric and the old man took care of the horses. The dame then removed Helen's wrappings and bonnet, and laid them on a bed in the corner, which she said was to be her sleeping-place. She and the old man occupied a bed on the opposite side.

Helen's scruples about taking a bed in the same room with the pair were at an end when the good dame produced a piece of chintz from a large chest, and extemporized a curtain across the corner where stood the hospitable couch.

Talking the while, she set about preparations for supper, and in less than an hour a capital meal was set out on the rude table. Smoked buffalo-tongue and broiled venison steak, hot corn-cake, biscuits and coffee, sent forth a delicious and appetizing odor. They all sat down together, and Helen felt cheerful again as she ate of the good things heaped on her plate.

Some time after supper, the dame bade her husband and the stranger "turn their faces to the wall," to enable the young lady to prepare for bed. They took the hint, and went out to look after the horses.

Helen scarcely imagined she could have felt so pleasant a sense of security in a strange place. She lay long awake, thinking of her dear father, and the strange romance of her own life he had disclosed to her. She had no wish to find the real father who had deserted her beloved mother. Her affections clung to the kind friend who had taken care of and educated her. Would she find him better on the morrow? She sent up an earnest prayer for his safety and their speedy reunion, and then fatigue overpowered her senses.

Ulric had a bed in the loft, to which he ascended by a narrow ladder, lighted by a tallow candle. He set it upon a chest, and seated himself on the hard straw pallet. There was a large bit of broken looking-glass fastened in a crevice of the logs, and it reflected the unprepossessing face of the doctor's assistant.

He started as he first caught the reflection of a visage begrimmed with dust; scarcely familiar enough with his own features to see that it was not some lurking savage peering at him. Then he burst into a low laugh, and looked more closely into the glass, pushing back his bushy hair with his fingers.

"A pretty phiz," he muttered, "for the part I am to play to-morrow." Again he laughed, chuckling to himself.

"What a surprise she will have!" he went on, speaking to himself. "Old Margaret might have guessed what I was about, if she had been clever, but the girl could have no suspicion. And now my time has come!"

"She is not the old fellow's daughter; that I found out two months ago; and she has a rich father! Dead or alive, I'll root him up! He shall know where his girl is; but she shall be provided with a good husband before he finds her!"

"The money in the chemist's box will set us up in housekeeping; but I look to the rich father-in-law for heaps more! Ulric, my boy, you were certainly born under a lucky star."

He rubbed his legs with his big brown hands.

"Will the old fellow track us?" he thought. "Hardly; for he was carried off by the robbers in league with the pretty woman who has a sick husband. I know something about her, too! Ulric has his eyes, and ears open; and good sight and hearing are worth a fortune in this country! I'll warrant me she'll keep old Merle safely housed till she can get away with her bandits; for I heard him threaten her. And as to Margaret—why, the robbers will take care of her. They'll be furious when they find the money gone; and if they cut the woman's throat, so much the better!"

Hearing a movement below, the plotter extinguished his light. Sleep came alike to the conspirator and traitor—to the worthy old couple, and to their lovely guest.

When the sun rose, a line of blood-red light smote on Helen's eyes, rousing her from slumber. It was a narrow plank of bituminous pine, inserted between the logs, that gleamed like fire in the eastern rays. The farmer's wife was busy preparing breakfast, and had a blazing fire. The old man was chopping wood outside.

A basin of cold water and a clean towel were placed beside the girl's bed. She made her toilet, and went out, fresh as a rose, bidding her hostess a cheerful good-morning.

The breakfast was excellent; and immediately after the horses, saddled, were brought to the door. Helen put a liberal fee into the good woman's hand, and thanked her for her kindness and the rest she had so much needed.

They crossed the river on a rude ferry craft of logs, and after a long ride along its borders through heavy timber, came unexpectedly upon a splendid scene.

It was another broad plain where herds of cattle were grazing. Far on the right was a large wheat field, defended from the cattle by regular ditches and embankments; this showed the cultivation of a rich proprietor. The cattle grazing on the plain outside the field were very shy, and fled in droves at the approach of the strangers.

Helen's eye caught a cloud of dust in the extreme distance, and presently a herdsman came into view. He wore the common dress, with tanned skins roughly wound around his legs below the knee, and fastened with strings. He had massive iron spurs and chains on his heavy boots. The hind tree and pommel of his saddle rose abruptly, so that the rider could retain his seat in any position; the pommel terminating in an eagle's head; the trimming of the saddle covering the back of the horse. The stirrups were of wood, and large, with leather covering in front to protect the feet and legs from splattering mud. The bridle consisted of a single rein, with a heavy iron bit.

This horseman was evidently intent on capturing one of the steers or horses; and Helen checked her horse, and made a sign to Ulric to stop, as she watched his movements.

The man carried a lasso made of four strips of scraped rawhide, cut and plaited like a whip-lash, and about fifty feet in length. It had a loop or noose in one end, through which the other was passed and drawn up to a coil some five feet in diameter.

The rider had taken this coil in his right hand, as he approached the caballero of herd of broken horses. As they started to fly, he bore swiftly down on them, swung the lasso till the coil opened, and flung it dexterously round the neck of one of the young and wilder animals. The victim reared, pulled, straightened the cord, but resistance was vain; with a bound he fell helpless. The *vaquero* had caught him at the distance of thirty feet.

It was the first time the girl had witnessed this achievement, common as it was in the country, where the herds belonging to wealthy proprietors are almost as wild as in their native state, and are turned out to graze on the vast pastures covered with wild grass. But Ulric gave her no time to linger.

They rode on for hours, stopping at noon to refresh their horses beside a running stream under some trees.

Helen had no idea she had so far to go. She began to be distrustful of her guide. He seemed to assume authority over her, and would give no satisfactory answers to her anxious inquiries.

In the afternoon they passed through a wilder part of the country. The path could hardly be traced. The poor girl was ready to sink with fatigue; but she pressed on; inwardly resolving to stop at the next rancho they passed, and inquire whether they were going.

The shadows were lengthened, when Ulric suddenly drew rein before a mud cabin on the bank of a small stream, soaking rather than running under some luxuriant bushes.

A man was seated on a log before the wretched, squalid shanty; a rheumatic old man; evidently palsied by the use of rum. His mouth was open, except when it closed on a pipe he was shifting every minute; and red protuberances appeared on each cheekbone. Ulric spoke to him, but he shook his head and lifted one hand to his ear. Then Ulric made signs to him, and he nodded.

"It is only a little further," the half-breed said, encouragingly, to his mistress; and with a glad response of, "I shall soon see dear papa," Helen urged her horse forward.

Another ride through a piece of woods, and presently Ulric, who rode in advance, checked his horse and dismounted. He took the bridle of the lady's horse, and motioned to her to do the same.

Where are we going?" she asked.

He pointed to a path among the bushes.

"We must walk on, and leave the horses. They will be taken care of."

He slung the bridles across a bough, linked them, took the box on his shoulder, and led the way onward.

The girl followed, with a heart beating so rapidly that her breathing was impeded.

They came in view of a kind of rustic lodge curiously constructed. Branches of trees and tanned skins formed the roof, and green logs the sides of the cabin. It had not been long built, nor was it intended, as it appeared, for permanent habitation.

Ulric stopped at the entrance, lifted a coarse blanket that hung before it, then stood aside for the young girl to enter.

Helen turned upon him.

"Where is my father?" she demanded.

"He can not come here," replied her companion, quietly.

"But I can go to him! Take me there at once."

"It would endanger his safety. His enemies are looking for him. He is afraid of being captured, when it would be the worse for him."

"Did you not tell me he was wounded, and wanted to see me to nurse him?"

"I did. But he will not have you come till after sunset. He wished you to rest here; you will find abundant refreshment within. I will go to your father and tell him you are here, and come back for you when the time comes for your meeting."

His tone was peremptory, and Helen knew not how to express or to combat the dreadful doubts that began to oppress her. She must trust in somebody. What would become of her if the man trusted by her father had beguiled her all this way from home, and meant to do her harm! It could not be! She must check her foolish heart.

She entered the lodge, and found the interior much more comfortable than she had supposed possible, from the rude outside. A carpet was spread over the puncheon floor; skins, hung against the walls, formed a screen for a couch, which was covered with a handsome buffalo robe. There were actually books on some shelves in the corner, and on a kind of sideboard made of pine boards, stood a bottle of wine, some dried fruits, biscuits and cakes. Evidently some pains had been taken to make the place habitable.

Helen sunk wearily on the couch and began to weep bitterly. To be so cruelly disappointed in the very moment to which she had looked forward with such hope and anxiety.

Ulric spoke cheerfully, and assured her that her troubles would soon be at end. He poured out some wine, and entreated her to take refreshment. She would need all her strength before long.

He left the lodge, and the poor girl, exhausted with fatigue and weeping, felt that she ought to make an effort to keep up her spirits. After eating, she tried to sleep, resolutely shutting out of her mind every thought tending to make her nervous. In a few hours, she trusted, all would be well.

She had slept some time, when she started from a terrifying dream, and screaming for Margaret. She could not remember where she was.

It was quite dark, and she heard the dismal sighing of the wind outside the cabin. Steps were approaching, as she knew by the crushing sound made on the dry leaves.

She sprang to her feet and listened intently. Then she heard the voice of Ulric, and saw the gleam of a lantern carried in his hand.

"Are you ready?" he asked. "You had better put on your cloak; you will find it cold. Come."

Hastily throwing on her wrappings, Helen left the cabin and followed her attendant into the forest.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PRISON GUEST.

How fared it meanwhile with Dr. Merle?

He had no opportunity to see the face of his captor; though he heard his voice giving directions to the man who helped him, and to the Indian lad. When they arrived at the stopping-place, the chief bade the latter take away the horses, and carry a message to some one whose name could not be distinctly heard.

The doctor was taken up a wide flight of stairs, and dragged into a room devoid of light, yet having windows, as he judged, for he could see the stars twinkling through them.

He demanded the reason of the violence to which he had been subjected. But he could get no answer beyond a caution not to meddle in future with the affairs of others.

The hint was sufficient to convince him that some one afraid of being betrayed had concerted this plan to get rid of him for a time. Who could this be? He had discovered, and whom he had threatened with exposure!

Dr. Merle begged to be liberated from his bonds, and to have a light, if he were to be left in that place alone. The first request was complied with. Stiff and sore from the constrained position, he felt much relieved when he was able to stand upright, and use his hands and feet.

Then he asked his captor what ransom he expected.

There was no answer. The same silence after several questions, and then the prisoner found he was alone in the room. Stepping cautiously around, he touched a wall of unplastered plank, broken by rafters at regular intervals. Guided by feeling the boards as he went, he came to the door, which was heavy and massive. As he expected, it was locked. There were staples for bars, but none were drawn.

When he had made the entire circuit of the room, he discovered that it was an apartment about thirty-five feet square, with but one door, and two windows heavily barred with iron.

Was he, then, in a common goal?

He next examined the furniture as well as he could. There was an iron safe, on which stood a candlestick; the safe was closed. There were chairs and a low pallet of straw, over which a buffalo-skin was thrown. When he reached this, the doctor sat down, and endeavored to collect his thoughts.

There was no doubt that he owed his abduction to the fears of the mysterious woman, who, he had reason to know, would not hesitate to murder any one who stood in her way. She had contented herself with consigning him to imprisonment—probably till she could leave the neighborhood. He could not long be incarcerated without search being made. The members of his family would at once apply to the officers of justice; and, inefficient as these were, they would ferret him out in a day or two. He need not be uneasy, in the meantime. He required rest; it was better that he should rest it. The moody feeling in his head warned him against indulging in painful or bewildering thoughts. So he threw himself at length on the pallet, and was soon in a comfortable slumber.

It was broad day when he unclosed his eyes. He went to one of the windows. It commanded an extensive view over a broken country, still green with vegetation. The sunshine fell like gold on the fields and woods. The panes of glass, behind the bars of rusty iron, were darkened with dust and cobwebs. These he removed with a deal of labor, and succeeded in raising the sash, so as to admit the fresh air. He now perceived that the windows were at a considerable height from the ground.

Then he turned to examine his prison. It was of the dimensions he had supposed—but bare of carpet or furniture for comfort, and filled with dust. There was a safe, and two or three empty barrels stood on one side. The door was locked, as before, but it appeared to have been opened while he had been asleep, for near it stood a tray, with a loaf of bread, a bottle of wine, and a decanter of cold water.

"They do not mean to starve me yet, at any rate," was his mental remark. He had a pocket-knife in his pocket, and with that he cut slices from the loaf, and ate heartily, drinking the wine, after he had noticed that the cork had not been tampered with. People in desperate circumstances, he thought, should always keep up their strength by nourishing food, if they can get it.

Refreshed by the meager repast, he set himself to devise means of escape, if possible.

It appeared evident that the place had not been used as a prison. It looked more like an old warehouse. Pieces of paper he picked up were fragments of invoices, yellow with age and dust. The safe was one that had been used to keep mercantile papers or money; though it seemed to have been long out of use. He managed to tear from its socket an iron bar that had become loosened by rust, and this he secreted, as it might be of service.

Clearly there was no means of getting out of the room by the door; it was massive in security, and had been used as a door, not as a window. And this was not the front of the house, where he might have seen passers-by from the windows. The outlook was upon meadows, where he could see only a few sheep grazing at a distance.

The window-bars were examined carefully. Most of them were firmly imbedded in the solid brickwork. But, after hours of labor, the prisoner discovered that two of the upper ones belonged to one of the windows could be shaken with a slight rattle. With his knife he dug away the plastering, and with the iron bar wrenched from the safe managed to break away a portion of the brickwork. Time and perseverance would enable him to dislodge both of the bars.

But most of the day had been consumed while he worked; the dead silence that reigned through the building convinced him that his kidnappers had left it; and nothing could be done till next day.

He was weary with trying to concoct plans; he was worn with anxiety about those at home. Then, too, he had exhausted his store of food. Would another supply be sent?

The night drove him to seek repose; but it passed in restless and fitful slumbers.

In the deep darkness that precedes the first breaking of dawn, as the prisoner turned on his bed, he saw the glimmer of a yellow ray that seemed to be shot through a keyhole. He sprang up, fully awake in an instant, and walked softly to the door. The light vanished, but, as he conjectured, it was obscured by the insertion of a key in the lock by some one outside.

His first plan was to stand in wait, and when the door opened, to dart out and struggle for liberty. The same idea may have occurred to his visitor, or the alarm may have been given by his movements, for, after an instant's delay, the key was withdrawn.

Dr. Merle put his eye to the keyhole. He saw a figure in woman's garments, the face shrouded by a long, slouching hood. This figure held the heavy key. A man, who could be seen but indistinctly, stood behind, with something in his hand. The two were whispering earnestly, and the female seemed insisting on something. Then both retired, and closed the door of the outer room as they went.

It was vexations enough. What could have frightened them away? Dr. Merle, in vain tried to fathom the mystery. With a groan of disappointment, he retreated to his couch.

He had not lain there long, when a creaking sound, that seemed to be above him, or in the air, startled every faculty into keen attention. He could see nothing, but he distinctly heard the regular breathing of some one. He was not alone in the room.

A very faint rustling succeeded. The prisoner stretched out his hands; for it seemed to be close to him; but he touched nothing. He could hear the breathing, however, the more plainly, as there were efforts to suppress it.

"Who is here?" he asked, in a subdued voice. There was no reply.

"Some one is in this room besides myself," he went on. "I can not imagine how the person entered without opening the door; but the fact is certain that some one is near me. Will you have the goodness to speak?"

Something was set upon the floor.

"I have brought you a supply of food—and some wine," said a voice, in a whisper.

"Thanks," he replied. "Thanks, madam, for I perceive that my visitor is of the fair sex. Will you give me your hand?"

"No—I will not; nor can you find me!" answered the voice, which now seemed more distant.

"We might play at hide and seek all night without meeting each other," said the doctor, pleasantly. "Be sure I shall not attempt to molest you."

"You had better not. It is much more for your interest to conciliate me."

The unlucky prisoner knew that. "How shall I conciliate you?" he asked.

"By obedience."

"Blind and implicit?"

"Exactly. You will do well for yourself in that."

"And what am I to do?"

"I will tell you; but you must swear secrecy."

"Forever?"

"Well, no; for a time only. Till I give you leave to speak. When my purpose is accomplished you can do no harm."

"And your purpose is—what I understood on our first meeting?" asked the doctor, with a shudder he could not repress.

"No; you need not fear that. Not that, now."

"You do not seek to destroy life?"

"No; there is too much risk. But I want you to prepare me a medicine, untraceable by any means, that will for a time render the person who takes it partially unconscious of what is done around him, though not worse in health, to all appearance."

"You mean a drug that will paralyze the brain?"

"For a time—yes."

"But will not destroy life?"

"Yes; one that would affect the brain without other injury, and only for a time; that would have to be renewed at intervals, and when given no longer, would leave no trace of its effects."

"So that the patient would regain his faculties?"

"Precisely. You know of such medicines?"

"Certainly. They are dangerous, however."

"Not destructive to life?"

"No; but there is danger to the brain. It is not safe to tamper with that."

"We must take that risk. Well, will you help me?"

"I can not help myself. I am in your power. But I can do nothing while shut up here."

"If I send for materials, can you prepare it before I release you?"

"I suppose I might. But the chief ingredients are in my cabinet."

"They can be fetched."

"Perhaps I may do with what you can purchase," said the doctor, who on second thoughts did not like the idea of sending his captors to his house. "I will give you a list to-morrow of such materials as I want."

"And you will prepare the medicine in good faith, and swear secrecy till I give you leave to speak?"

"You may rely upon me."

"You shall be well rewarded. I have a splendid prospect ahead."

"Which would be marred by the knowledge of some more scrupulous person?"

"It might be. It is a vast enterprise in which others are concerned, and needs careful work."

"The person who is to take the medicine is opposed to it, then?"

"I will tell you nothing; only that I shall be able to pay you more than you dream of in a short time. You promise, then, to serve me?"

"I can do no otherwise, as I am your prisoner."

"But you shall be my friend if you choose. Will you? You shall find my service lead to fortune."

"I dare say."

"I will not trouble you further, now. In the morning you may push the list under your door. I will leave you some paper and a pencil. Your freedom—even your life—depends on your keeping faith with me."

There was a slight whirring noise, and something hard fell on the floor. Then a dead silence followed. The prisoner spoke, but there was no answer. He was alone again.

He did not puzzle himself as to the means by which his late visitor had left the room. He flung himself on the couch and wished for daylight. How often have we all been conscious of our utter helplessness in darkness!

(To be continued—commenced in No. 155.)

The False Widow:

OR,
FLORIEN REDESDALE'S FORTUNE.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON,
AUTHOR OF "ADRIA, THE ADOPTED," "CRUISE OF THE 'STRANGERS' WED,'" "MADAME DU-ROUX'S PROPHESY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.—CONTINUED.

There had been no sitting that day on which Florien had visited the banking-house of Leesingham & Co. The portrait was at a standstill until the wedding and its attendant flutter of excitement should be over. Kenyon, who was quite at home in the mansion now, dropped in to relieve what had promised to be a tedious evening. Florien welcomed him gladly; she was nervous and spiritless after the various vicissitudes which had besieged her. Mrs. Redesdale was enduring one of her dullest, prosiest hours—on with a semblance of calmest complacency. In reality, she was wishing him at the poles, or some equally obscure if less remote station; but she made it a matter of policy to stand well with all the world, and had succeeded in engaging him in a game of chess which promised to be interminable from his slowly-studied moves. Apparently absorbed in the mimic battle waged upon the board, she was furtively watching the young couple at the opposite end of the room.

"All goes well," she mused, exultingly. "Those two young fools yonder are half in love with each other now, and neither knows it. This night will put her fiancé irrevocably in the colonel's power, and change any soft sentiment she may yet feel for him to scorn and aversion. What a gentle mistress Fate shows herself sometimes! Here am I, sweeping all before me, secure in my place as if it were mine by right, with a half-dozen solid men of the upper crust ready to lay their offerings at my feet with only half a word of encouragement. What desperate odds would Marquessone fly to if I should accept one of them, I wonder? Fortunately his gains—not honest ones I'm afraid—don't compel me to the measure. He deserves something from me for his constancy, and they say men are never faithful. Well, there are exceptions to all rules, and he is one of them. Four and twenty years between wooing and wearing is surely enough to prove any man's constancy."

The slow game and her gratified reflection were broken by a sharp peal of the bell. The door was flung wide after a little delay, and the servant announced:

"Mr. Lynne!"

Mrs. Redesdale started. Had her self-gratu-

lations been premature—were the carefully-scheduled plans to be frustrated at this momentous stage of the game? Florien's heart was like the slow beat of a muffled drum—a shade of pallor swept over her cheeks. Had she really hoped he might be playing her false? She had not realized it until now, and now she knew how fully she was counting upon regaining her freedom. She heaved almost a relieved sigh, and reproached herself for it in the same breath.

For it was not her lover who advanced into the brilliancy of the gaslit room. This was a little old man, brown and shriveled as an Egyptian mummy, supporting his steps with a stout stick, but scanning active enough to have dispensed with it.

Mrs. Redesdale rose to extend the courtesies due the occasion, but he waved her back into her seat, speaking with the quivering voice of age but with a rapidity which did not admit interruption.

"Your servant, my dear madame! Um-m! chess it is, I see. Don't break the game on my account, I implore you. I did myself the honor of calling here on New Year's Day, and have been contemplating the pleasure of a visit ever since, but this isn't it, so don't break your pleasant occupation, I beg. Ah, my dear young lady, your humbly devoted—always an admirer of beauty, ha! ha!"

"Just dropped in as I was passing—on the look-out for a rascally nephew of mine. Not here, I see—all the better for you. Thought I would warn you all against the puppy. Sad dog he is—spendthrift, gambler, what-not! Spent his own fortune and as many other ones as he could get his fingers on—half a dozen, I dare say, one way and another. I paid his debts three times—third time the charm, you know—and then cut him for good. You wouldn't believe the means he has tried to impose on me since. Sent a begging subscription list once by one of his own ilk—got a hundred dollars on it, and gave a champagne supper next night. Tried to pass a thousand-dollar order done in very clever imitation of my hand, and only saved himself by being caught at it—I let him go at that, more fool I, perhaps. What would you suppose his latest to be? He's over head and ears stuck in the mire, it seems; lives fast, gambles fast, and loses fast. What does he do but comes to me this very day; tells me he is going to reform—old story that!—on the eve of marrying fifteen thousand a year, and wants a lift out of his difficulties till that's over. Don't happen to know that fifteen thousand any of you, hey? Pretty figure, quite too pretty for that scapegrace of a nephew of mine. I started him with a grand buzzing in his ear—told him I'd leave him a dollar to buy a neck-collar with; that, more fool I, perhaps. What would you suppose his latest to be? He's over head and ears stuck in the mire, it seems; lives fast, gambles fast, and loses fast. What does he do but comes to me this very day; tells me he is going to reform—old story that!—on the eve of marrying fifteen thousand a year, and wants a lift out of his difficulties till that's over. Don't happen to know that fifteen thousand any of you, hey? Pretty figure, quite too pretty for that scapegrace of a nephew of mine. I started him with a grand buzzing in his ear—told him I'd leave him a dollar to buy a neck-collar with; that,

speedy parting from his only child, left him trembling on a balance between the jubilant and the lachrymose; the ring was placed on the soft dimpled hand by the bridegroom, who was a little uncomfortable and flushed at being made a target by heaven only knows how many hundreds of pairs of eyes. It was all over at last, and a select company of invited guests went back to partake of the wedding banquet.

The shutters were tight closed, the rooms flooded with such brilliancy as only a full glare of gas can effect. The breakfast-table, extending the whole length of the double suite of rooms, which had the folding-doors thrown back and artfully concealed by floral arches until it seemed one unbroken range, was resplendent with the glitter of silver and crystal, and was weighed down with rare delicacies gathered from all quarters of the globe, which only a metropolitan market can afford. But the crowning glory of the board was the cake occupying the central space. It was like a small mountain, the apex crowned by a temple of crystallized sweetness, the entire surface crusted over with exquisite designs, an earthly confection of heavenly beauty in its whitely granulated purity.

The dainty bride herself placed a knife at the base of the frosted temple, and considered her share of the stupendous effort required in cutting that cake accomplished. It was out, however, by somebody, and every one had a piece. There was a ring in it, of course, and all were on the alert to discover its disposal.

Walter Lynne had been best man, consequently was paired off with Miss Lessingham. Fair as ever in his effeminate beauty, and dressed to the verge of scrupulous nicety. His white hands were small as a woman's; his china-blue eyes, his dimple-cleft chin, his fresh complexion—just the style to take captive the fancy of an inexperienced and romantic girl. So Florien acknowledged as she swept his make-up with one critical glance, but her woman's heart told her that they were only selfish surface lights reflected from the blue eyes, that the fair, regular features were characterless and insipid. He had endeavored more than once during the morning to catch her eye or exchange a word with her. He held a glass of wine, and now, under cover of the general twitter of expectation attendant upon the cutting of the important cake, he leaned across, to murmur in her ear:

"I shall implore the gods by this magic draught to send the ring to your lot, Florien. I should be sure, then, that the Fates meant to intercede for me."

This was no time and no place for a scene, so Florien answered carelessly, not meeting his glance lest her own should betray her scorn of the ignoble part he was playing.

"I hope it may, Mr. Lynne, if only to spare some more superstitious damsel the pangs of disappointment. I don't acknowledge a fate which bows to fortune, do you?"

What did she mean?—he wondered, with a blank stare of speculation.

"Gerry has it—Gerry Lessingham has the ring," whispered one of the sharp-eyed bridesmaids, and then it ran around the table—"Miss Lessingham has the ring."

Miss Lessingham acknowledged to it without even a blush, and slipped the ring on a slender finger where two others already sparkled, wearing her honor with perfect composure.

After that the happy pair were toasted, the friends commiserated over the loss they were soon to sustain. The bride left the scene to exchange her away robes for a traveling-dress, but first there was a general farewell made to the company, who began to drop away; there was an affecting scene with the parents and close friends she was leaving; then the newly wedded couple entered the carriage which awaited them and were whirled away.

In the confusion attending the breaking up of the company, Florien found the opportunity for which she had been waiting. She signaled Aubrey, and, slipping her hand within his arm, detained him as the press of the throng drifted away.

"Now, tell me," said she, not looking at him, but without any attempt to avoid the glance, half of pity, half of scrutiny, which he gave her. There was no need of prelude or explanation. Aubrey experienced a bitter twinge as he thought:

"There's but one subject in her mind regarding which I can enlighten her, apparently. Will she hate me for telling her the truth, I wonder?"

"I was at the place, Miss Redesdale," he said. "I am forced to tell you that he was there also."

"And he played?"

"And he played."

The drooping lashes were up and the hazel eyes met his, but betrayed nothing.

"Thank you, Mr. Lessingham. Was that all you learned?"

"Do you wish to know more? Shall I tell you all that I learned there?" He was burning with indignation at the remembrance, and lost sight of the resolve he had made to keep the indignity which had been offered her from Florien's knowledge.

"Tell me every thing. I know more of Mr. Lynne's boasts, I think, than you imagine."

He recited briefly the occurrences of the night, and this is what his recital comprised:

It was just eleven when he gained admittance to the house in question, which was precisely what the writer of the anonymous note represented it. There were few persons gathered yet, but it was not ten minutes after that Lynne came in alone. He looked harassed, and was so abstracted that he had passed close by without observing Aubrey, and threw himself into a chair by one of the empty tables. It was not long until he was joined by Colonel Marquestone. Aubrey was not close enough to hear their conversation, but Lynne seemed to be urging some scruple, which the other laughed down. He ordered liquor to be brought to them, and drank rather heavily before beginning to play.

Aubrey drew nearer and threw himself into a deep chair, pretending to read, but watching them all the while from the shelter his paper afforded.

Lynne lost steadily. He played with deliberate coolness at first, but the liquor he drank was stronger than he had any suspicion of it being, and with the progress of the game he grew more and more reckless until he lost sight of all caution. At last he threw down the cards with a sullen outburst, and scowled across at the colonel.

"You've got the same run you've had for weeks past. By heaven! there's trickery somewhere."

"You're out of luck," answered the other, coolly. "Come, try again."

"What is this farce you are keeping up?" Lynne demanded. "You hold my notes now for fifty thousand dollars, and you know that I haven't fifty thousand cents. What object have you in setting me into your debt for sums you know I'll never pay you?"

"Honest at last," the colonel replied, sneeringly. "So the fifteen thousand yearly and the pretty bulk to be reached in time, were not meant as security. Look out for glass houses, Lynne; there has been trickery, I think."

"Not on my part. I've been square from the first, and I'll make you see on that if I ever

come into it. Do you mean to wait, I want to know?"

Lynne had been angry and defiant, but now he turned faint, pallid, as the colonel answered:

"That little form of notes drawn on sight tickles. No, my dear fellow, I don't mean to wait."

"In the name of Heaven, what do you mean?"

"In the name of Heaven—nothing! In my own name—a great deal. I must have that money or its equivalent within twenty-four hours."

"You will ruin me! I made my last appeal to my uncle to-day, and he refused utterly to help me in any way. I've lost everything. I can't pay it—you know I can't."

"Then you'd better take a little loan, I am, and play ahead—until luck changes."

"If I could play my soul against you, I'd do it," declared Lynne, passionately. "I'd give that to know why you are tempting me on."

"Quite too insignificant, my dear fellow—the bait would never take. Suppose I give you another chance—what do you say to playing off your fair fiancée against every thing I hold of yours? If you win, you save yourself and have her in the bargain; if you lose, it's nothing worse than you are already. Consider, Walter, it's your last chance, your only chance. If you refuse it, I shall lay all those little notes of honor, with your signature attached, before Miss Redesdale, at the earliest available hour in the morning. You know best if you can risk that."

Walter did know—he knew with that he would lose every chance of ever winning Florien. It ended in his complying with the solicitation of the colonel, and—he lost.

"Ruined!" he groaned, dropping his head upon the table.

"Not so bad as that, though I do have to trouble you for another signature," Marquestone answered, producing a paper which he had prepared. "Just a bond declaring the last stake we played for, and I'll give you time on the rest."

"Do you want to marry her yourself?" Lynne asked.

"That's rather a leading question. Well—no. To be candid, I don't believe the young lady takes to me especially. Bad taste in her, but it's the truth, nevertheless."

It ended in Lynne's signing, and they had gone away arm-in-arm after all. Colonel Marquestone still retained his supremacy over the young man who was such a weak and pliable tool in his hands.

Then, and not until then, Aubrey put down the paper behind which he had sheltered himself, and went out into the street just as the gray morning light was breaking.

"The villain!" he concluded his recital with a burst of indignation he could not wholly repress. "I'll break every bone in his contemptible little body, if you only say the word, Miss Redesdale."

"I positively forbid your interference in my quarrel, Mr. Lessingham. He is beneath your notice, as he is beneath mine. Don't look so vengeful, please. Can't you see that I am in no danger of breaking my heart over his perfidy?"

He caught her hands in both his, and his eager face drooped low over her bright hair.

"I believe you are glad to be free from him. Florien—may I dare—"

She checked his words with a glance, as she gently drew her hands away.

"Not now. Come, Mr. Lessingham, or we will be too late to bid farewell to the bride."

They moved away down the length of the now almost deserted rooms, and when they were fairly gone, out from the shadow of the flower-wreathed column where she had stood, came Gerry Lessingham.

CHAPTER XXI

TWO IMPORTANT INTERVIEWS.

To say that Mr. Walter Lynne was seriously discomfited would but faintly convey the disturbed state of mind in which he found himself. He had parted from the colonel at the close of that disastrous night on which, for the want of other security, he had staked his claim upon his fiancée, and lost. Though he had lost, he made mental oath that he would not give up Florien without one last effort to right himself and to disappoint the colonel's calculations, whatever they might be. He went up the long flights of stairs and into his room with a dragging, inelastic step. The place was cheerless and dark with the misty gray of the struggling dawn filtering a chilly twilight through one window where the curtain was left undrawn. Mr. Lynne, pattern of all that was dainty and fastidious in his personal equipments, had not carried his luxurious tastes into the appointments of his own apartment. Not but he might have done so had not fate—he was in the habit, like most weak people, of attributing every thing good or ill which befell him to fate—had not fate so ordered it that he was always considerably straitened in means, and severely economical in those little necessities of life which lay completely behind the scenes. It was rather large and rather bare, on the third floor of a second-rate boarding-house. Now as he struck a light his surroundings made themselves apparent, dingy and comfortless. The carpet was faded and threadbare in spots; there was a skeleton bedstead with lumpy mattress and coarse coverlet; a half-dozen cane-seat chairs; a deal washstand with ever and basin of very cloudy and suspicious whiteness; a bureau littered over, and an open dressing-case, which, with its rich furnishings, seemed out of place with its surroundings.

Mr. Lynne flung off his overcoat and threw himself, dressed as he was, upon the uninviting couch, shading his eyes from the light with an unsteady hand.

"What devil's recklessness tempted me to run my head into such a noose?" he thought, grinding his teeth in the impotency of his rage.

"Why couldn't I hold a check-rein until after I was all safe with Florien? She wouldn't go back on her word as long as I was fair and square with her, though. I half suspect the spirited little beauty isn't so fond of me as she was once upon a time. And I—well, it's sheer ruin to me unless some last desperate move will bring her to terms. How unlucky that she should get a hint of that professional business just now; if she hears of this night's work on top of it, my case is a gone one. She must not hear of it—I mustn't let her have time enough for that. She can't be indifferent quite, though the ardor of first love has cooled a little. Heavens! how she's improved under the process, too! I never did fancy your gushing women, and she's self-contained as the worst iceberg in the North seas—when she chooses. She must melt, though, when it's put to her to take me or lose me; she'll not be ready for that alternative, though she may fight shy on it. She was ready enough once, and I'll have to work on her sympathies in some decided way to bring her back to the old path. Hang the luck that's got me into such a fix! What in the name of all the fiends is Marquestone driving at—cutting off his last chance of getting a dollar from me? It must be that he's going to try his own chances—fool! did I to

think that she would stoop to look at him. Curse Marquestone, I say! curse myself—curse every thing and everybody!"

The delivery of that scathing anathema was quite too much for Mr. Lynne's recumbent position. He sprang up and began pacing the floor with such hasty strides as his rather indolent inclinations seldom led him to indulge.

The morning light grew more distinct in its gray opalescence, and the gas-flame paled in its chilling growth, as he kept up that steady tramp, tramp, up and down, over and across the length and breadth of the dreary room, kicking some offending article out of the way now and then, but scarcely pausing.

The stir of the day had begun below stairs. The ringing of the early bells, and the rattling of the butcher's and baker's wagons, aroused him to the fact that it was past seven and he had not slept a wink through the entire night. Sleep was impossible even now, but it would never do to appear at the wedding with that haggard face and those unstrung nerves. He gave himself a shake, brushed back his unkempt hair, settled his collar, buttoned on the overcoat he had thrown carelessly across a chair upon his recent entrance, took his hat and went out. Down the length of one street and up another to the fashionable restaurant where he took his meals; for, if Mr. Lynne could stifle himself in some particulars, denying the gratification of his rather epicurean appetite was none of them.

He drank absinthe until his heavy eyes were brightened and a generous flush displaced the pallor of his face. He had a delicious breakfast served, and, thanks to the subtle draught, did ample justice to it. And later he appeared at the wedding, and carried himself through his part with the ease and composure of a man who had not a care upon his mind or a debt of honor he could not meet weighing upon his conscience.

But in that restless walk up and down his room, in the gray of early morning, he had worked out a plan; and in following it, found himself at four that afternoon on the steps of the Redesdale mansion.

Florien was alone in her own room when his card was brought to her, with a pencilled request for a private interview. She was expecting the card, and she was waiting, though not quite so soon as that. She was only home for an hour, but already had changed her snowy bridesmaid's robes for an afternoon dress of violet silk, and had dismissed her maid only a moment before the latter returned, bearing Lynne's card. She had met the footman with it upon the stairs, and taken the commission at his asking.

"Where was the gentleman shown, Adele?" "He didn't wait for showing, Miss—Thomas said. He's gone into the library, and says he'll wait your convenience."

He did not have long to wait, for the library door turned noiselessly on its silver hinges five minutes after his message had gone up. He was standing by a table playing somewhat nervously with an ivory paper-cutter, posing for the occasion; his regular features played upon by an agitation which was uncomfortably real, and which he meant to plausibly explain. This was a very trying moment for Mr. Lynne. He let his fair fiancée quite enter, and then started forward as if just conscious of her presence.

"How quiet you are!—you actually startled me, Florien."

"I understood you were waiting," Florien said, with a little curiosity to know how he proposed extricating himself from his embarrassed situation. She half hoped that he would display more manliness than she credited him with—that he would make a plain statement of the truth and receive his *conge* at her hands with the best grace the circumstances would admit.

She soon learned how far he was from any such thought.

"It's unprecedented, I suppose, this intrusion of mine at this time, but I haven't a choice in the matter, and I can't rest, Florien, darling, till I'm assured of the best or the worst."

It has come to this, my own, that you must either make me the most blessed man the earth holds, or the most miserable. Which shall it be? Will you marry me at a moment's notice, Florien, or will you send me away forever?"

"Why at only a moment's notice?" she asked, at a loss to divine what deceptions he could embrace.

"Because—at last—I am offered an opportunity to make my own way without chance of disappointment—to make my fortune sooner and surer than fortunes are often secured where no great risks attend the making. But I shall be obliged to leave America—I shall have to take passage for the East Indies by the ship which sails the day after to-morrow."

He had considered his story well, and he told it gently, not hesitating her look of response in his anxiety to impress her with the point of persuasion he thought must have their intended effect.

"You have heard me speak of my great-uncle, the eccentric millionaire whose heir I expect to be some day. Give me credit for never presuming on that probability, Miss Redesdale—think how easy it would be for me to live on the prospect. Well, he is engaged extensively in the East India trade. He is partner in a Calcutta firm, but thinks of closing out his share in the business. He wants an agent who is perfectly trustworthy, and who has judgment enough to act in securing his best interests. There seems to be a break in the concern somewhere, and it may require a year or two, or even three to hunt up the raveled ends of the business. Uncle Lynne has proposed to give me the commission provided I go at once. It's a grand chance, Florien. He offers me half the profits for all the time I'm engaged at it, and a liberal percentage on what is made. Or, if, when every thing is straightened, I care to stay on there, I'm to have the privilege of carrying it on in my own name—buy him out at a nominal price, which amounts to the same thing as presenting me the partnership at last. It's an incredible stroke of luck for me."

"Incredible indeed," murmured Florien.

"You see just how it is, Florien. I've got into such a confounded pinch here, along with meddling with stocks and the like, that I'm fairly forced into taking it."

"Now then, my darling, will you throw empty scruples aside, and as my cherished bride go sailing over the wide seas with me? Remember how long and how patiently I have loved you, dear. Think of those blissful hours passed together on the Jersey sands—of our long walks there happy autumn evenings with the waves murmuring at our feet, and the white moon coming out with the dusk to sail overhead. Such peaceful times, the happiest in my life, Florien, for there were not always a dozen empty-headed popinjays hanging about to dispute for your favor then. Remember that I loved you then truly as I have done since—as I do now. You were ready to take me once out of hand—will you do the same thing now?"

"It is very sudden," Florien's face was averted, and there was a constraint in her voice which Lynne attributed to a cause far from the right one.

"Darling, glorious creature!" he thought. "She loves me well enough to forgive the little deception I've been obliged to practice, when the point's gained, and our impromptu voyage

ends in a bridal trip through France and Italy. And Marquestone will never suspect till it's too late for his interference."

He felt assured and immensely relieved, and continued his fabrications with unsuspecting effrontery.

"Very sudden. I got my first hint of it yesterday noon, and came to you at the earliest moment I could hope to gain a hearing, after being closeted with uncle half the night. There wasn't a chance for a word in that crowd this morning."

"You were with the elder Mr. Lynne for half the night—the first half presumably?"

She was looking at him now with a penetrating gaze, which sorely disconcerted her lover, who had been so confident only a moment before. Could he have known how he was committing himself—how despicable he was making himself appear in her sight—he would sooner have bitten off his tongue than made these false assertions.

"The first half?—why, of course. You couldn't suppose I was with him the last half with the duties of to-day ahead of me. In heaven's name, what is it, Florien? Why do you look at me in that way?"

Such a look of ineffable scorn and contempt he had never encountered in all his life before.

"I do not suppose you were with your uncle during the latter part of the night, Mr. Lynne! I have been too well informed of your movements for that. I know you were not at an early hour, since he was here for the express purpose of warning those whom it might concern against you. There is some discrepancy between his version and yours of your interview yesterday."

His heart gave two or three fluttering pulsations, and seemed to stand still as she began to speak; he could do nothing but gaze at her with horror-struck eyes.

What a consummate idiot he had been! Why had he not considered how like his disagreeable old relative it was to take such a step? After his own urging of his engagement to the Redesdale heiress as security for the loan he was seeking, and after the old man's ungracious refusal—how had he so completely overlooked the possibility? What a ring her voice had, and how superbly beautiful she was with her outraged sense of honor asserting itself.

"I have heard it said that men are always true to each other, however false they may be to credulous women, but you seem to make a point of breaking faith with man and woman. I doubt if Colonel Marquestone would incline to be lenient in keeping back those little notes of honor which would be so embarrassing if presented just now, could he know how you are fulfilling the conditions of the bond you gave him."

That too! There wasn't a shadow of a hope for him now, and he shrank abjectly in the face of her angry scorn as she went resolutely on:

"Your uncle thought it a pity that fifteen thousand a year should be wasted upon a man who has gambled away half a dozen fortunes, his own and other people's—and so do I. You thought proper to stake your claim upon me at Colonel Marquestone's suggestion, and you lost—another fortune gone the same old road, you will perceive. Considering these circumstances, Mr. Lynne, the assertion of your uncle's confidence in you is a little ill-timed, and I really must decline accompanying you either on your voyage to the Indies or your journey through life. Let me wish you *bon voyage* though before we separate."

All was lost—all! Yet at that supreme moment, knowing how she must despise him and his treachery, he loved her more truly, more wildly than ever before. He was weak, unstable as water, intensely selfish, but then and there he had no room for one-throe of regret over the vanished fortune, he only felt that he had lost her.

"Florien, oh Florien, forgive me!" His voice quavered and was broken through by sobs; he fairly broke down under that weight of mingled mortification and despair. The sight of a man, be he ever so unmanly, moved to such grief, is at all times a pitiable one to witness, though it is not held anger against so weak a being as that.

"I can forgive you," she answered, slowly. "I can forgive you, and believe you more cowardly than deliberately wicked. You are selfish to the core, Walter Lynne, but I don't believe you are utterly bad. For instance, I believe if you had succeeded with the imposition you attempted, you would have made as good a husband as it is in such a weak nature to be—you would never with malice prepense have treated me unkindly. You might even have renounced your ruling vice, and left the follies of youth behind you. I don't really believe that it is simply and wholly the loss of my fortune that you are regretting now."

"Indeed it is not—indeed it is not. I have been a villain—a scoundrel—a weak fool, easily led. But oh! Florien, Florien! give me one more chance. Let me redeem myself—don't leave me utterly hopeless. However bad I have been, I have always loved you truly, and if I could I would marry you to-night though you were penniless and forsaken of all God's creatures as I am now—unless you pity me, Florien."

"But as I am not penniless or forsaken, your loyalty will not be put to so severe a test," she answered, dryly. "That will do, Mr. Lynne. I can forgive you, because I have lost nothing but a little Quixotic faith in humanity. I can pity you in certain ways since I know this to be a bitter disappointment—a bright illusion fading into space! That is the furthest end my generosity is capable of attaining now or ever."

With that she swept out, and Walter Lynne—crestfallen, humiliated and despairing—went sullenly back to his dingy lodgings. They had never seemed dingier, more comfortless—his life had never been more barren of aim or hope.

Weak and a coward, he had always shrunk from suffering, mental or physical, and his first act now was to blunt the keenness of his distress. He brought out a liquor-case stocked with strong French brandies, and, alone as he was, sat there engaged in bitter reflections and free libations until the "wee, smm' hours" were creeping on.

Meanwhile, as the early evening approached, the elder Walter Lynne sat also alone in a sumptuous apartment of his spacious house. Twilight shades were stealing into the room, and the mummy-like little old man had settled himself in his favorite easy-chair for his customary after-dinner nap. But somehow sleep refused to visit his eyelids, which kept flying open as though governed by unmanageable springs.

"It's the old trouble," he grumbled, giving the pillow which had supported his head a testy toss. "The old trouble, confound it! I won't endow a hospital, and I won't establish a mission, any more than I'll scatter my money to the four winds of heaven, feeding the ravens—the devil's poor. Hang the dog! why can't he be any thing but a scapegrace and spare me any amount of badgering? Disadvantage of being rich without a worthy heir. Wish I was poor—on my word, I do. Tried to get so once—went to dabbling in the stocks the puppy talks about, and hanged if they didn't double on my hands every time. I don't see any way for it but to take me a wife in the winter of

my life, and a wife I don't want. Well, what is it, Sims?" This to a servant bowing in the door.

"A lady, sir."

"A lady—hum-umph! Some tract-distributing, Bible-begging female—another disadvantage of being rich, confound it! What are you waiting for, you gawky? Show the person in; get the agony over. It's all in a piece with female artifice to take a man at a disadvantage in his best after-dinner humor, and they seem to know I can't refuse any thing to the sex."

The door opened to his visitor, dark-robed and close-veiled, unrecognizable in that semi-gloom. The millionaire, eccentric and crabbed in many ways, was always courteous in his own house.

"Ah, madame, be seated, pray. Lights, Sims. Why, has the fellow gone already?"

He put out his hand to touch the bell, but the lady threw back her veil and interposed.

"Please don't ring. It is too early for lights, and I can deliver my errand as well in the dusk. You do not recognize me, I think. I am Miss Lessingham."

"Miss Lessingham—little Gerry that I've toted on my knee before now? Bless me! how times change. More gratified by the honor than you can imagine, my dear young lady. Seems to me now I've something like a claim to you. You wouldn't believe, I suppose, that I'd really ought to have been your grandfather. Fact, though. Would have been, too, only your grandmother saw it in another light. Said no when I asked her, and married a Lessingham inside a month. 'Once a fool, always a fool,' they say; but I never made a fool of myself again—more's the pity. Always had a fancy for you for her sake—that's a fact, Miss Gerry."

"It is the remembrance of your old kindness which emboldens me to come to you now, Mr. Lynne. I have come to intercede with you in behalf of your nephew, your namesake—the only relative you have in the world. I know that he applied to you in his trouble and that you refused him, but I want the chance of helping him through you."

"Walter—just puppy! Up to his tricks, hah! He's been imposing on you, too, eh? Help him! I'll see him at the deuce, first!"

"Mr. Lynne—"

"You don't know how that scamp has disappointed me. Thriftless, cowardly knave! Never would have turned him off if he'd kept out of the bad. There's no reform in the scoundrel, either. Time and again I've set him on his feet, and he kicks the props out in the same old way. Sorry to refuse you any thing on account of old times and your grandmother, Miss Gerry, but I'll not do any thing for him."

"But you'll not refuse me a favor, please, Mr. Lynne?" Could this gentle, pleading creature be the same haughty Geraldine who quenced it right royally in her own sphere, who had gained a reputation for heartless coquetry, who could count her repulsed lovers by the score—a belle of five seasons' standing, but a favorite still, and likely to remain so—was this she, humbling herself to plead for a man who had passed her over for a younger, richer, fairer rival? Truly, a woman's heart is an inscrutable mystery.

"You will not refuse me, Mr. Lynne? I shall ask nothing more than you would willingly do as a matter of accommodation to any man of business and probity. Please promise to do as I wish without bringing up an objection. For the sake of my grandmother, Mr. Lynne."

"What is it the child wants? Don't mystify an old man, Gerry. I thought you were begging for that scapegrace nephew of mine. Of course, I'm willing to oblige you."

"There, you have promised. You can't break your word, you know. This is what I want, Mr. Lynne."

And this it was, by a different round of circumlocution than she employed:

Miss Lessingham was a small heiress in her own right. An uncle—her mother's brother—of whom, if the truth must be told, she had been undoubtedly assumed during his lifetime, upon her gratitude, if nothing more, at his death, by leaving her the entire proceeds of thirty years' engagement in the vulgar business of soap-boiling. The little fortune of fifty thousand dollars was quite within her own control. What she wanted now was for the elder Mr. Lynne to take her investments off her hands, giving her a check for the amount. Woman-like, having decided upon her action, she could not delay one moment in carrying it on to fulfillment.

"To let you throw it away on that puppy—is that what you mean? No, Miss Lessingham."

"You promised, you know. Besides, if you refuse, I'll have to go to some tiresome broker, which no one can prevent my doing, and be bothered with a lot of unnecessary forms. I thought you might be willing to spare me that."

"Why didn't you go to your father or your brother, then?" queried Mr. Lynne, sharply.

"Because they would have remonstrated, and objected, and worried me without changing my purpose in the least, just as you seem bound to do, Mr. Lynne. The money is my own to use as I like. If I choose to help a fellow-creature instead of frittering it away in party-going and party-dressing, there's no human reason why I shouldn't."

"And the upshot of it was that she had her own way."

"For if she will, she will—my depend on't. And if she won't, she won't—so there's an end on't."

"I wish you joy of your bargain, Miss Lessingham. I suppose you intend to do the thing up in regular style—proper moment—raining him in the face—loan from kind friend—turned from the evil of his way—finale. Oh, by zounds! do you happen to know, my dear young lady, that the dog has managed to get himself engaged to fifteen thousand a year? Pretty girl—spirited—think she'll cut him, from her look—gave her a hint of what he was up to myself. I don't think you need count any thing from that fifteen thousand a year, Miss Gerry. Truth is you might just as well put your money in that grate there."

"I shall live to convince you differently, Mr. Lynne. I'll have a full equivalent for every cent, you shall see."

She rose to go as she spoke. Lights had been brought during the interview, and now the eccentric Mr. Lynne peered sharply into her face as she stood drawing on her gloves.

"You're the very picture of your grandmother, Gerry, but she was younger—just sixteen when she married—"

"And I am twenty-four. Think of it. Close on the pale of old maidenhood."

"Umph! might be worse. Could do better, though. Miss Gerry, will you marry me and cut off that scapegrace's chance of squandering my money some day?"

"Rival my own grandmother?—oh! Mr. Lynne. Won't it be better if I reform the scapegrace? Don't force me to a point-blank refusal, you generous man."

"Reform him—wish she could—save me any amount of trouble," grumbled he, as the door closed upon her retreating form. "Can't be done—sorry—hang him!"

And he settled down to his long-deferred after-dinner nap.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 149.)

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The New Volume.

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OR,
A Bride, but not a Wife,

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Our Arm-Chair.

Chat.—We have to say that the pressure for the reproduction of "The Wolf Demon" is so strong, we find it necessary to put it on the schedule; and shall, therefore, do so, giving this now celebrated wildwood romance its second presentation in our columns. Fully aware, at its first issue, of its marked originality and singular power, we yet were not prepared for the sensation which it created, nor for the great demand for it after its run in the paper. This call for it, coming from all quarters, and all classes of readers, of course soon exhausted our earlier editions, large as they were; and so many of the numbers running out of print, we were, at length, unable to supply the story. As a consequence, the demand for republication has been almost unintermitted; and while we, as a rule, do not care to reprint successful stories, in this case we must repeat it, and thus both clear the table of unfilled orders and stay the accumulation of others sure to come.

—We can not, as has been stated repeatedly in our columns, answer correspondents giving "reasons" for declining manuscripts. In exercising the office of editor we but follow the Darwinian theory of "natural selection," in which the fittest survives. Strange as it may seem, seven-tenths of the MSS. that drift into editorial rooms are unfit for publication because of imperfectness of manuscript. A great many persons "write for the press" who don't know how to write. Now, just think of an editor's position if he attempted to give his reasons! He would have to become a kind of common schoolmaster. In cases where the MSS. are correct enough as compositions yet are unavailable, it is not possible to say why they are rejected, because that would entail great labor without any corresponding good to the paper. It might, it is true, be good for the author, but the editor is not catering for individuals who have no special claims on his time and knowledge. He is only solicitous to obtain what is the best for his paper without regard to persons, and to do this must be at liberty to reject without restraint, nor be called upon to give an explanation or reason for his choice.

—Some unfeeling wretch states that a maiden lady (age not mentioned) was told by a traveling gentleman that every woman who had a small mouth was provided with a husband by Government. "Is it possible?" said the lady, making her mouth as little as she could. The gentleman added, "That if she had a large mouth, she was provided with two husbands." "My gracious," exclaimed the lady, at the same time throwing her mouth open to the full extent. And it is added that the traveling gentleman, becoming alarmed at the size of the mouth, made his escape and has not been heard of since. It is strange how mean some men can be. To take advantage of an unprotected female, at any time, is discreditable; to encourage those that are doomed to be dashed is dishonorable; but, to make her show herself as she is, is—very provoking.

THIS, THAT AND THE OTHER.

Men's Hats! What troubles me about these articles is just this: what makes country folks so fond of wearing their hats at all times? In the house and out of the house they are never hatless, and they don't even think it worth while to remove them when they go visiting. I really believe they'd go to bed in them if only some one were bold enough to set the fashion.

Is it because these men are so proud of their head-gear or are they afraid of some one's robbing them of their "lids" that makes them insist upon wearing their hats in unseasonable times and at wrong places? I don't think it a very polite fashion, to say the least. It looks exactly as though they hadn't much respect for those around them. You can always tell the true gentleman, for he removes the hat when he enters the house, and does not put it on again until he leaves it. It shows politeness to doff one's hat, and I really believe it pays to be polite when it costs so little, don't you?

That "crawl"—Some time since I noticed that a new fashionable freak was to be adopted in England and this country, styled the "crawl"—something similar to the "Grecian bend," and inwardly I wondered to myself if the world was going mad, or if people didn't have a more profitable way to dispose of their precious time than by trying to find out how hideously they could deform themselves? Really one would be inclined to suppose Darwin to be right, and that we were only following the gait and manners of our ancestors, the baboons.

It is really shocking to think how some individuals are willing to strive to make the bodies God gave them appear as though they were suffering from a great infirmity. When the Almighty Father gave us a being, He meant it should be filled with a brain to plan noble purposes, and a heart to carry them out; but you can not make me believe it is gratifying to Him to see you limp and mince along as though there were but two things to live for, money and fashion. There is nothing gained—unless you call your own esteem a gain—by deforming yourselves. Go through life erect, as you were intended to, and don't "crawl" along like a snake. You sink yourselves low in the estimation of the refined and become the laughing-stock of the vulgar. And when you enter God's house of prayer with these unrealities, you become downright wicked—your presence is a mockery.

Sincerity. Be sincere in what you do and say. Don't praise your friend's contributions to the papers simply because he is your friend. If you don't think them meritorious, you will be doing him a greater kindness to point out their errors, in order that he may correct them, and make him a better writer.

If you are asked advice on any subject, and you know that the asker wants it to be in harmony with his own wishes, don't let that deter you from stating what you think is for the best. There are some cases where we must do our duty, even though we may offend and hurt the feelings of our nearest and best friends.

Thankfulness. Be thankful for the blessings bestowed upon you, and if your friends are in your favor, let them see that you are grateful. A "thank you" costs but little, but it serves to show that you appreciate a kindness done. He is a surly fellow who will not give you a thankful word when you have been the means of gratifying him. We are, all of us, only more anxious to find fault and censure than we are to praise and be thankful, and it is none too soon to reverse the order of arrangements and make a change in the programme. EVE LAWLESS.

MEANNESS.

Did you ever know a mean man to be happy? Is he not always worrying about his money, calculating it more of a curse than a pleasure to him? He is afraid to place his treasures in the bank lest it fail, and he is almost as fearful to keep it in his house, dreading lest it may be burned, or robbers enter and despoil him of his gains. Although he may take delight in counting over his treasure, still that pleasure is somewhat mixed with anxiety.

He lives in the constant dread that some one may become richer than he, for he estimates a man's worth in proportion to his golden possessions. He never knows the beauties of the orphan's or widow's blessing, because he never gives any thing in charity, and it would be like begging mercy at a tyrant's hands to ask him for a penny.

The world, in his eyes, is merely a place to accumulate money in, and to hoard it up when once secured. What are others' wants to him? What cares he whether his brother man lives or dies, so long as he touches not his money nor calls on him for aid?

You can always tell the mean man by his hard features and the look stamped upon his countenance, that says, "plunder that world could do." "If you want money, keep out of my way; but, if you have some to give me, walk by my side."

The heart he carries in his body has long since ceased to beat with true life; a stone seems to have usurped its place. There is no tear in his eye if he reads of the destitution of others; his pocketbook never unloosens at the cry of distress, nor does he feel one twinge of conscience when he brushes the beggar from his path.

Can such a man hope for the estimation and good-will of his fellow-beings? Must he not look despicable in the eyes of the Almighty? Is not the poorest human being, if endowed with charity, far his superior in every way? And will not his deeds outweigh those of his miserly neighbor?

If the mean man could see himself as others see him, he might find that he was not quite the envied being he imagines himself to be. When he dies, there will be no mourners at his funeral, and no kindly tears will ever wet his tombstone. F. S. F.

The man who has a brave and gentle heart, that he can not keep a secret, is a gentleman in that name's most noble meaning. Nature's gentleman can never be disguised; the rough and rugged garb can not conceal, neither does he draw off his character in the holiday unmentionables together, or rid himself of his urbanity as well as his boots by the same kink.

SESQUIPEDALIA VERBA!

I HAPPENED in my reading the other day, to come across a saying, which at once struck me as being a truth in more than one sense. "Wisdom don't always speak in Greek and Latin." Now, if all our public speakers were conscious of this, I am thinking their speeches would be better appreciated by the common people. If the proverb was changed so as to read, "Wisdom does not use words that its hearers can not understand," I think it would be an improvement. It is a weakness that too many of our ministers and lecturers have—this fondness for big words.

Writers, too, are still more apt to get into a habit of expressing their ideas, however small, by large words—young writers especially. There is, in all things, reason; and this practice, now so common, should be brought within the limits of reason. Large words are well enough in their places; but it is not right to use a large word when a smaller would express the writer's or speaker's opinion better; for this shows a lack of good judgment. It should be kept in mind, that, even in these days of intelligence, every person we meet did not receive his education in a college, nor is he able to comprehend every word found in Webster's Unabridged.

In nearly all novels and light reading, we see evidence of bombast, which, instead of adding either to the strength or beauty of an expression, serves rather to spoil the writer's meaning, which if expressed in common words, might contain some fine sentiments. Latin and French phrases abound. I think it safe to say that not one reader in ten is able to readily get at the meaning of them. Now, this is not as it should be. However, I am glad to say that but few of our ablest writers are guilty of this fault.

Empty vessels make the most sound. Young writers and speakers should strive against falling into this practice, lest they happen to be classed under the head of "empty vessels," for large words are often used for sound than for the meaning they express, as a general rule.

E. W. BARTLETT.

Foolscap Papers.

The Tichborne Claimant.

It is impossible for me to keep still any longer. I have kept my secret in my own bosom and have never breathed it before to any man; but I was just bidding my time, and that time is now here. I will tell it.

I AM THE TRUE TICHBORNE CLAIMANT.

Now I feel a good deal better after that candid admission, and Arthur Orton will tremble in his boots when he hears it. I was waiting for him to stir the matter up to a foaming ferment, and then I would step in and show a scar on my nose which I got when I was a boy, along with a brick from another boy who hadn't politeness enough to allow me to call him a liar without making a fuss about it.

I am the only true heir; you can readily tell that by my air, and I came from a long line of ancestors; that is, my ancestors all measured six feet, and it will take but a moment for me to run over them and substantiate my just claim to the Tichborne estate.

I am not altogether certain that any of my ancestors lived before Adam, or even if they were contemporaries of that renowned gentleman, and were old friends and cronies of his. I shall not dwell here. The first account I find of them in the family records states that some of the family constructed a hollow elephant of wood, and obtained admission into the Ark, riding safely over the deluge, and shortly afterwards emigrated to England, and settled close to London.

Slim John Whitehorn, from whom I shall trace my descent, afterward moved to London and opened an office for the mending of boots and shoes. In the course of time he would have wedded the daughter of a duke, but he could find no daughter of a duke who would have him; so he married his housekeeper, and that's the last we hear of him.

His son, Ezekiel, set his heart upon a baronet's daughter and married his cook, and lived a life of repentance and soap-making.

His son, Peter, even from the time he was a lad, had a great desire to be king of England—certainly a strange and exalted wish in the heart of any youth—but as he found that selling peanuts would be incompatible with wearing the crown, he resolutely stuck to peanuts, and took a prominent stand in the society of that day; that is, he occupied a corner of a principal street, and by discriminatingly examining the character of the postal currency he took in, and not being so particular of the kind he gave out in change, he accumulated almost enough to keep him from going on the parish.

His daughter, Angelina, whose beauty was extremely rare, but in what sense I can not determine, in her girlhood's days never dreamed of marrying a viscount of the realm, and she never did, but bestowed her hand, and afterward the fire-shovel, upon a gentleman who furnished eels and shrimps to the Tichborne family. This husband shortly after indulged in suicide, his name on his tombstone is Weazle. His wife, finding life monotonous, soon joined him, and did her best to take the fire-shovel along.

Their son, Mike, was a youth of high aspirations, and once licked one of the Tichborne boys, and always took to sore eyes. He was his father's brother's nephew and his aunt's niece; his grandfather was his father's paternal sire, and he was closely related to his kinsfolk. He always kept a pup. He never married, but died and left a good many acquaintances and friends.

One of his friends married a daughter of the Tichbornes; then follows a long line of marriages and divorces, both happy down to the time that Jewhillekins Whitehorn had the honor of being caught by the butcher suspiciously close to the Tichborne chicken-coop with his arms full of feathers—with chickens inside of them. An explanation was demanded; but, though W. gave several, in some of which he resorted to the most speculative depths of abstract reasoning, none seemed to satisfy the butcher, and he boot kept remarkably close to Mr. W. until he got out the gate; and it was for this act that some of the Tichborne estate descended on him—that is to say, the butcher threw a very heavy clod of earth, and it lit on Whitehorn's head. This is really all of the property that the Whitehorn family ever got directly.

My own uncle fell in love with a daughter of the Tichbornes. They met one day while being drawn around in their little wagons by their nurses; they were then only three months old. It was a case of early love; they loved on first sight. They smiled on each other. My uncle quoted poetry of the warmest pathos in her delighted ear; she sighed, and nibbled her teething-ring. Indeed, they exchanged their teething-rings on the spot and swore eternal friendship. They never recovered, but lived to get married. My uncle and my aunt were ever afterward happy.

I was their only son. From all this plain evidence, it is perfectly clear that the Whiteborns are the true Tichbornes; besides, hasn't everybody borne their

tick long enough to be satisfied beyond all doubt?

I have the veritable mole on my arm, and on my little toe I have the family corn. Can any one with sane mind look at my false teeth and say I am not the man?

Just as soon as I can raise money enough to go to England, I shall hurry there and take that estate under my arm, and bring it over, and set some of my friends up in the peanut business.

WASHINGTON TICHBORNE WHITEHORN, Baronet.

Woman's World.

Work and Wages of Women.—Inefficiency of Women as Workers.—Education and the only remedy.—She Must be Protected by Laws, Institutions and Organizations.—Hotels, Club-Houses, Unions and Associations for Women.—Marriage a Sacrament.—Single Life the Perfection of Sacrifice.

A few evenings since, Anna Dickinson lectured at Steinway Hall, in New York. Her audience were respectable in point of numbers, and more than respectable in the classes of our metropolitan society represented. Many prominent ladies from the Sorosis Club were there, and the "sterner sex" was represented by many distinguished writers, journalists and editors. All seemed deeply interested in the fair-cloaked orator's words. Her subject was "Woman's Work and Wages." Of course she had the argument all her own way, and made out a very plain case, showing that men received better wages than women because they were really more efficient workers. She argued further, that a more vigorous and practical education and training bestowed on women, would remedy that part of the evil. She made out a very plain case, but failed to convince one of her audience, at all events, that a complete remedy for women's inefficiency could be found in education and training.

The truth is, we don't desire to entirely remedy this inefficiency. We don't want a woman educated like a man, or attempting to do a man's work. We don't want her to be a competitor with men in all the fields in which they labor. We wish to reform that tendency of modern society, which requires a woman to prove herself a man's equal, which would force her to earn her living, and push her way in the world just like a man.

Now, let me not be misunderstood. I would not have women weaker, or more ignorant, or narrower, or more selfish than they are. I would only have men more manly, more wise, more magnanimous, more chivalrous, more unselfish than to expect a woman to accomplish what a man does. If women must go out in the world and win their way, and earn their wages as men do, men should be educated to remember that they are women, and should be treated as women. Not as dolls or children, to be stuffed with flattery and petted and indulged with finery, and gew-gaws, and bon-bons; but as human beings with souls, and individuals whose self-respect must be preserved, and whose moral influence is more valuable than their intellectual or physical strength.

I respect Anna Dickinson for her earnest and honest utterance, and I accept all the truth she gave expression to, and the only issue I have with her and her class of thinkers on this momentous subject is, that they have made a radical mistake in not recognizing the differences in the mental, moral and physical natures of men and women. I would not have any less education or training bestowed on young women, but I would have other means also adopted to equalize her powers with those of men when she is forced to be a worker in the same fields with him. I would shield her from the necessity of contact with his world as a worker, but never forbid her to enter it, provided she felt the desire and liberty to do so. I would break down every barrier for her, but I would still recognize her inherent weakness, and shield it with as many beneficial laws and institutions and organizations as I possibly could.

I would form stock companies to build twenty more such women's hotels as Mr. Stewart is erecting for the workingwomen of this city. I would have as many clubs and club-houses for women as for men in New York. I would desire to see as many trades unions formed for workingwomen as for workmen, and when a strike for higher wages, or shortened hours of labor, was necessary, I would have women strike for them as well as men. But, I would go even further. I would wish to see the stronger muscles and larger capacity for endurance in brain work, with which men are by nature endowed, actually taxed, (not petitioned or solicited), but taxed to throw all needful help in the way of women, to enable them to live pure and true and honorable lives as workingwomen, when thrown into the ranks of labor, whether that labor be of muscle or brain. I would have the means taken away forcibly from my son that he would squander in creating the class of women who are supping the very life of our people; and I would give it where it would tend to elevate in public opinion the woman of pure and chaste demeanor, and willing hands in the honorable bearing of life's burdens, and sure and nimble feet walking in the paths of virtue, love and duty.

I would make marriage a sacrament, not a sacrifice of all honor and purity, and truth and womanhood, and manhood, as it too frequently is made. I would see husbands choose and create their wives as helpmates, not in the material sense of the word alone, but in its higher significance as soul-helpers in the path that leads to eternal life. I would see wives recognize their duty to be such helpmates to their husbands, never forgetting one practical duty, however lowly it may seem. I would see both men and women value each other, more for their mental and moral than their physical perfections. I would see single women respect themselves, and each other, and each other's feelings and opinions and positions, even more than they do those of their married sisters; moving thereby that they recognize the fact that theirs can be a life of greater perfection when all its duties are fulfilled than any other. As its sacrifice is higher, holier and better, because more is required of it, so should it be more honored by women themselves, more in their actions toward each other than in their spoken or written words.

EMILY VERDERY.

THE reader has a new treat in store, for we have from Mr. Whitaker's hand a sea and shore romance, which, in several particulars, is one of the most captivating stories that has yet fallen from his delightful pen. It is

THE SEA CAT;

OR,
The Witch of Darien.

A STORY OF THE BUCCANEERS.

In which Morgan, the celebrated Sea Rover and enemy of the Spaniards, plays out an episode in his astonishing career that is literally thrilling as a narration. It may be anticipated with all curiosity and interest, for it will fully answer, in its exciting and thrilling narrative, any expectancy formed.

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Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage. No MSS. prepared for future orders.—Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only when stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS. as "copy"; third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter. In writing, use both sides of a sheet. The Commercial Note also paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, tearing off each page as it is written, and carefully giving its full page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give the most favorable consideration. Correspondents must be able to state columns for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We shall have to decline the following: "Willow Tavern," "A Detective's Story," "Mystic Music," "Minnie's Bravery," "A Lost Character," "The Backwood Wedding," "A Race for a Wife," "Mountain Jim," "The Scout's Vengeance," "The Rose Garden's Secret," "A Bad Preacher," "The Whim," "Mrs. Prondoot's Old Friend," "The Race for Office."

The several manuscripts by B. F. V. we can not report on at present.

The several poems by M. K. T. we shall have to return. They are good, but hardly good enough to make us wish to retain them.

The following we can use: "Race for a Whale," "The High-Caste's Vengeance," "The Whim," "A Cabin-boy's Gratitude," "The Mad Harpioneer," "The Kidnapper's Doom," "The Astrologer's Fate," "A Fancied Miss Mineralva Pleasures Party," "A Boat Over the Ferry," "Poor Miss Phillips."

T. T. R. See answer below to Annie C. G.

ALEX S. Have answered you by mail.

FRIEND GEORGE, D. Appleton & Co.

W. H. M. Can not supply the stories named, complete. The first five numbers will cost you 25 cents.

The story by Dyke Norke is good enough for use, but we can not find place for it.

BRUNN ADAMS. Probably not. The serials published in the SATURDAY JOURNAL will not be reprinted in book form.

J. H. G. We really have forgotten about the MS. referred to. If it was announced as accepted it will appear some time.

ATLANTIC. We believe all our foreign steamers supply themselves with employees from abroad. The chance for employment on them is small.

J. C. J. is enthusiastic over his favorite weekly. We hope always to retain his good opinion.

ANNIE C. G. "Ouida" is a Miss De La Rame. She is an Englishwoman, and has written four or five novels, all successes, but as her novels are purely moral or good in their tone. She is now in Florence.

EFFIE C. B. We do not "want" any thing—prose or verse; but we are always glad to receive what is truly original and good. We have no preferences, so you need not infer. Of course writers for whom we have made a reputation, and who are always welcome to our readers, are worth more to us than strangers.

MISS N. M. The study of mythology is almost totally overlooked in our systems of education, and as a consequence, only classical scholars are familiar with the subject. It is so closely allied with history, that it is so material a portion of the civilization of every country, prior to the advent of Christianity, that Mythology and History are inseparable. Procure a good Dictionary or Text-book of Mythology and study it constantly at hand for reading and reference. You will find it most captivating as a study.

HERBERT L. The usual thermometer used in this country is that made by or invented by Fahrenheit, in which the fixed point, or zero—0 is obtained by mixing pounded ice and muriatic ammonia, and starting from the point or temperature at which the mixture begins to divide into equal parts, 32 degrees being the freezing and 212 degrees the boiling point of water. This thermometer is generally adopted in the United States and Great Britain. On the Continent, however, the freezing and 100 degrees the boiling point of water. Reaumur's zero is also at the freezing point of water, and the scale is divided into 80 equal parts, making 80 degrees the boiling point of water. On Delish's or Reaumur, the fixed point or zero is the boiling point of water, making the freezing point 180.

YOUNG WIFE. A poultice of tea leaves is exceedingly efficacious in cases of burns or scalds. It is a remedy much used in the East Indies.

DOCTRESS. Bones in the body do not always reform where broken or injured. Sometimes, indeed, the bone disappears by absorption. A man in Massachusetts had his arm contused by the horn of an ox. When the soreness subsided, a scale was formed between the shoulder joint and elbow, and was absorbed, leaving the limb between those two points perfectly boniless. Annals of surgery abound with similar anomalies.

MISS E. E. S. No reason has yet been given for the absence of all knowledge of the laws of harmony in music, among all the nations of the East, even the most civilized—as the Chinese, Japanese, and others. They can make horrid noises and call that music. In all Mohammedan mosques the music is but noise. It is considered beneath the dignity of a Mohammedan to play with music. Servants and slaves are usually the only performers of those melancholy airs that predispose a person who has heard such music, to suicide. They escape from the grating rattle of discord, or hang themselves, if there is no other alternative.

FIREWAX. To mend Indian rubber or other hose, cut the defective portion out, and sew a piece of iron tube of a foot in length twist the hose until the ends meet; then wrap with twine well waxed.

MOLLIE BRYER. Perhaps the cause of your bad breath is tight lacing. Light lacing, remember that lacing themselves out of shape is sure to cause a bad breath.

MRS. MORTON. Dress your boys in sack coats with capes, and pants cut to the knee.

YOUNG MISS. Girls only of advanced ages should be permitted to wear laces in their dresses. Mothers should not encourage their daughters in exposing their shoulders, for fashion will only too soon make them immodest in their display of neck, shoulder and bust.

SUE HARR. Black hair is fashionable and appropriate to be worn at all seasons, and for either morning and evening dresses.

FARMER JOHN. Clover was introduced into the agriculture of Great Britain about the 16th century, from the Low Countries (Holland), where it had been long cultivated.

MATTIE L. Lord Byron died at the year 1834. He was thirty-six years of age at the time of his death.

BARNUM EYES. In Paris the sale of eyes intended for the human head amounts to nearly sixteen hundred in one month. In one of the leading establishments the servant has but one eye, and the effect of any of the eyes wanted by a customer can be conveniently tried in the servant's head. The charge averages one dollar per eye. For the poor, second-hand stigmat can be bought at reduced prices.

CAPTAIN STRAIN. The first steamer crossed the Atlantic in the year 1819.

MAS. P. P. BLISS. The Chinese *carte de visite* is truly a curiosity. For ordinary use it consists of a large sheet of bright red paper, upon which is written in large letters. For extra fine occasions this card is folded ten times, the name is written in the right hand lower corner, with a humiliating prefix such as, "Your unworthy friend who pays his respects." Four stanzas of verse, taking the place of "Respectfully yours." Etiquette requires one to return these cards—being presumed that their expense is too great for general distribution.

EFFIE ELLIOTT. To grind your tea fine like coffee, will give it twice the strength, although not so fine a flavor. Ladies in Ireland steep their tea, then dry the leaves again and give them to the poor, so much strength remains after use.

H. F. Z. The annual importation of champagne into the United States is estimated at \$4,000,000, of which not more than one-hundredth part

O'ER THE BRIDGE.

BY L. C. GREENWOOD.

On the moorland where the rose and lily bloom,
And ripples catch the sweetness of their spice perfume,
A brook in graceful windings thro' green grasses flows,
And bears them to its murmurs, where to? no one knows.

Here in summer, where all fair and all bright appear,
Led a youth his maiden bride in her youthful years,
O'er the bridge that spans the brook, glad and long ago,
And for her he made a home in that cottage low.

But in winter all is drear and seems dead around,
The dust of him she followed to his silent mound,
O'er the bridge that spans the brook, with a heart full
And with heavy steps she came to the cot once more.

On the shrouded moorland where no flowers blow,
While cold its voice is sobbing deep beneath the snow,
The brook from sight is hidden 'neath the folds of vine
Its silver undercurrent beats a silver chime.

Now in this moorland cottage sits one, weak and old,
On her head the snows of age long have decked the gold,
O'er the bridge that spans the brook, where the snow
Flakes fall.

Ah, they soon will bear her dust, when sweet seraphs call.

The Belle's Revenge.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

TALL, dark as an Italian, with glorious black eyes, large and liquid, and like a cherry, Her jetty hair was flowing in half-waving curls, only ornamented by a satin ribbon whose brightness was dimmed by the radiance of her ebullient. A regal-looking girl, whom you never would have taken for the sister of the insipid blonde who was languidly fastening a spray of silver wheat in her elaborately and gracefully arranged *coiffure*. But she of the raven hair was Olive Pensoyer, and the fair-haired girl was Marie Pensoyer, and they both called "mother" the little faded lady who was critically viewing their toilettes.

"That will do splendidly, Marie; that wheat-sheaf droops precisely enough. It contrasts admirably with your dress, doesn't it?"

Marie glanced at the trailing white silk dress that fitted her so perfectly.

"Yes, I think I will do; I want to look well on Mr. Moorfield's account."

As Marie spoke, she turned suddenly and looked in Olive's eyes; and a vivid blush surged over the dark cheeks as Olive's eyes dropped.

Mrs. Pensoyer smiled—a little contemptuously—at Olive.

"You are not in love with your sister's suitor, I hope?"

The voice was stern, and it bore an undercurrent of vague threatening.

"Because," Mrs. Pensoyer went on, as she smoothed down the heavy folds of Marie's silk, "you know how very desirable it would be for Marie to marry Mr. Moorfield. He is rich, and can afford her all the luxuries she has been accustomed to—that we have all stinted ourselves in order to give her."

Olive's face had grown pale again, but a sudden fire had flashed to her black eyes; they always did so flash when Mrs. Pensoyer so plainly displayed her partiality for her younger child—the one who looked so like her. And although Olive had grown accustomed to being second in her mother's affections, there were times when a rebellious spirit surged wildly within her that she should be obliged to take only what Marie left—even in a choice of lovers she must do it.

But now the fire quickly died out from her eyes, and a gentle, tender light took its place.

"I am sure Marie has had every opportunity to win Mr. Moorfield."

She was interrupted angrily.

"Has had! Are her chances at an end? or, perhaps you intend throwing down the gauntlet?"

Mrs. Pensoyer spoke in tones of most derisive sneering, and Marie smiled in cool disregard.

"I do not intend to, mother—because—I may as well tell you now, as any time, that Guy Moorfield this morning asked me to be his wife, and I accepted him."

Very quietly, almost freezing, Olive imparted her information, and yet with wildly throbbing heart, as she awaited the storm she knew would find vent.

Furious as she knew her mother and sister would be, she little imagined the form their fury would take; she was horrified when Mrs. Pensoyer staggered wrathfully up to her, shaking her fist in her eyes.

"You designing, treacherous beggar, you! How dare you thwart my daughter, you miserable, charity founding fool! This is what I get for taking you from a garret, to it, and making you one of my own?"

That was an awful blow to proud Olive Pensoyer; she, who in her womanly beauty, won Guy Moorfield, to suddenly learn she was not fit to be his wife, the wife of any man until she confessed her origin, and threw herself on his pity.

Had she never would, never could do; and so the sunshine of her joy that Guy Moorfield loved her, was suddenly turned into more than darkness because she was proud, and faithless to believe it could make no difference to him.

Very fair and very tender Marie Pensoyer was, sitting a little in the gloom of the tall lemon tree shadow, with her white hands idly clasped over her blue silk dress, and her blue eyes upturned into Guy Moorfield's face as he stood leaning against the mantel, and looking moodily down at her.

"It is the most incomprehensible thing I ever knew," he was saying, as he tore a shining leaf to fragments. "That she should have fled her home for such a trifling offense; I can not imagine it of her."

"It is just as I have told you, Mr. Moorfield," and Marie's soft, musical voice was in harmony with her compassionate, almost love-fringed eyes. "When poor Olive told us of her engagement to you, mamma very kindly told her she hoped you would not be disappointed to find she had nothing whatever. Olive seemed terribly surprised and disappointed, declared she never would be a portionless bride, and the next morning when mamma went to call her to breakfast—she had gone."

Marie's voice faltered, and she held her dainty lace-ruffled handkerchief to her eyes.

Mr. Moorfield smiled scornfully at the tableau—he could read her through and through.

"Well," he said, after a pause, "it shall be my business to follow and find her, and marry her wherever I find her. No other woman under the canopy above can ever be my wife but Olive Pensoyer."

Marie gave a little shivering start; and had not that handkerchief been in the way, Mr. Moorfield would have seen the fierce biting of the red under-lip and the sudden clenching together of the white fingers.

Would this bit of treachery and thus disastrously? Was it possible that this lover of Olive's would prove invulnerable to her own charms after Olive had gone from sight?

She almost caught her breath as Guy's words fell on her ears, almost solemn in their earnestness; "no other woman," then, but

Olive could be his wife; not even herself, who had planned so deeply, so futilely!

In that one silent second, Marie Pensoyer resolved what to do; Guy Moorfield might have his wife—and she, slighted, passed over for Olive Pensoyer, would have—her revenge.

It had required no magician's art to right things again. Mrs. Pensoyer and Marie had written such a penitent letter to Olive, declaring they never dreamed their little "joke" would produce such disastrous results; assuring her it would never be referred to again, and telling her what her lover had said. They besought her to come home, and be married.

Mrs. Pensoyer smiled, sardonically, as she sealed the letter, and directed it to the address Olive had left in her room; and had Olive seen that look, or the quiet triumph in Marie's manner, she would never have fallen on her knees in tearful thankfulness that the subterfuge had come.

So she went home, and was married to Guy Moorfield—never, for so much as a minute, dreaming of the trouble that was creeping in her tracks.

But it came; it came, all unsuspected, in the form of a guileless-looking, harmless note, addressed to Mrs. Moorfield, in a hand that was strange, but in words that made her heart beat with rapture.

Olive, my long lost daughter, I have just found you, and am sick unto death. Will you come to gladden your father's eyes before they are too dim to look upon you?"

With a hushed gladness in her yearning heart, Olive went, without delay, to the address indicated, to find a dark-faced, handsome man, who rapturously greeted her and embraced and kissed her.

She was astonished to find he was not ill; she did not observe how studiously he avoided calling her "daughter," and how persistently he did call her "his long lost daughter," "his own little Olive."

Somewhat, Olive was faithless to trust this Italian-like stranger; and after a very short, unsatisfactory interview she went home, herself wondering if all fathers were like hers.

At the front door her own maid met her with a penciled note, in her husband's hand.

"Olive," it said, "I was warned to watch you. I followed you straight to the arms of your lover, who will doubtless relieve me of 'his long lost daughter.' We do not meet again; my house will shelter you no longer."

"GUY MOORFIELD."

Olive reeled and fainted in the hall, while, peering over the landing, Mrs. Pensoyer and Marie, who had dropped in for a call on "dear Mrs. Moorfield," laughed in silent, devilish glee.

Their blow had struck home, their aim had been accomplished, and Olive, a truceless wife, was forbidden her husband's door, through their machinations.

True, Guy Moorfield never suspected they had sent the note telling him to watch his wife; true Olive never dreamed, when she read the summons from a dying parent, that that handsome, dark-browed stranger had been hired to play his part for her destruction, by the Pensoyers, whose revenge had never a moment slept. But true it was, and Olive tottered away, turned out from her own home, to seek a pillow as best she could.

"Mrs. Moorfield, can you see a stranger—a gentleman?" A sweet-faced old lady bent over the low cottage bed where Olive lay, her first-born on her arm.

"A stranger—a gentleman, Aunt Rebecca? Oh, my God, send it is Guy!" and her face turned paler than death, as she eagerly gave consent.

Then she waited in silent prayer; then she heard footsteps on the stairs in the hall, at her door; then—her husband clasped her in his arms, sobbing hard for forgiveness and mercy, and love from her whom he had dared to wrong in thought.

We need not repeat sacred words that sealed their re-union; enough, that "after many years" the clouds had arisen, and retribution settled where it was deserved.

Wasn't it too Bad?

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

MARCIA MOORE sat down on the steps to read the letters John Brent brought her.

"Oh!" she cried, "cousin Alice is going to be married next Christmas, and she wants me to come and stay with her a whole month before the wedding. Won't that be splendid?"

"I hope Alice's cousin, Marcia, will conclude to be married about the same time," answered John, looking down into Marcia's face, with a meaning smile.

There, you've begun on that again!" cried Marcia, blushing. "You know I made you promise not longer ago than last week, to let me have at least a month's peace."

"Well, I will," answered John. "I won't mention it again for a whole month."

"Remember that, please," said Marcia, and turned her attention to her letter.

John Brent liked Marcia Moore; but Marcia, like most girls, was fond of teasing the men, and consequently, when John asked her to marry him, she wouldn't say yes or no, but kept him in a sort of suspense that afforded her a great deal of satisfaction.

"Just hear what Alice writes," she said, looking up into John's sunburnt, but manly, handsome face. "We're likely to have an addition to Brentwood society for a few weeks."

She wrote:

"Robert Grant, one of our rich young men, a great catch, and a fine fellow, is coming out your way. I don't know exactly where, but somewhere near Brentwood, I think."

"I suppose every one of the young ladies of Brentwood will take it into their heads to make love to him the first time they meet him," said John. "Any one from the city is sure to find favor in their eyes, and the fact of this Grant's being rich will make him a pet and a lion at once."

"I hope you ain't jealous already," laughed Marcia.

"I don't know how soon I shall be," answered John.

The next week John learned that Mr. Grant had taken rooms at the Brentwood hotel for the summer, and would be in town in a few days.

"I'm in a hurry for him to come," said Marcia. "I'll warrant he's splendid!"

"Doubtless!" said John, disdainfully. "Being from the city, and rich, he must be."

"How sarcastic we are!" retorted Marcia, with a curl of her lip. If the truth must be confessed, she had been building some very pretty air-castles concerning Mr. Grant, and already she was beginning to feel—well, she didn't know exactly how herself, but just a little dissatisfied with country people and their ways of living. If she should marry a rich man like Mr. Grant—And just there Marcia could imagine wonderful things that would come to pass if she should ever be so fortunate. I don't think she bothered her head at all about what would become of John, in case she married Mr.

Grant. It wasn't like her to think of two things at the same time. She wasn't capable of it. But John thought her a very fair specimen of womanhood, and didn't detect the shallowness and superficiality about her. But then! he was in love, or *thought* he was, which amounts to the same thing, and that accounts for his blindness to Marcia's faults and shortcomings.

Mr. Grant came, and forthwith all the girls in Brentwood fell to chanting his praises.

"He's just splendid!" said Marcia, enthusiastically. "He's just pale enough to be interesting."

"Precisely how pale does a person have to be, to be interesting?" asked John.

"And he's got the nicest mustache," went on Marcia, ignoring John's question. "And such eyes! They're—oh, they're perfectly beautiful!"

"Humph!" John already began to feel considerable disgust on the subject.

"He promised to call," said Marcia. "I believe there's something congenial between us, for he likes Byron as well as I do, and the heliotope is his favorite flower."

"Wonderful man!" cried John. "Is there any similarity in your tastes for fried chickens, or strawberries and cream? If there is, there can be no doubt of your congeniality."

Marcia was so vexed at that that she wouldn't have any thing to say to John for a week. During that time she got quite intimate with Mr. Grant. He took her out riding once or twice, thereby causing jealousy in the hearts of all the young ladies of Brentwood, who, like Marcia, had taken a fancy to the city gentleman. Of course that made it all the more enjoyable to Marcia.

At the end of a week, John called, but Marcia was so busy entertaining Mr. Grant that she hadn't any time to spare him, and thereupon he got a little of the Brentwood temper up, and went directly to Mary Larson's, where he spent a very pleasant evening.

After that, Mr. Grant took Marcia to picnics, and walked with her to church, and was very attentive. So much so that the other young ladies who had designs on Mr. Grant began to think that there wasn't much show for them, and withdrew from the field, leaving Marcia to conquer, if she could.

And Marcia began to congratulate herself that it wasn't very hard work for country girls to win city gentlemen, if Mr. Grant was a fair specimen of them. More than once he had been on the point of proposing when something had happened to prevent it. Marcia began to count up the new dresses she would have her first season out as Mrs. Grant.

It gave her a few twinges of jealousy to see John Brent and Mary Larson so much together, and enjoying each other's company so much. Not that she really cared for John, she told herself, but it piqued her vanity to think he could so soon and so easily get over his passion for her.

But, one day, came a letter from her cousin, Alice, that leveled all her air-castles to the very dust.

"You wrote about Mr. Grant," wrote Alice, "and I inferred from what you said about him that he had been paying you some attentions. I hope it's merely a flirtation. The Mr. Grant is stopping at Brentwood is a cousin of the Mr. Grant I wrote to you about. He is a poor clerk, and I should hate to have you marry him. The other Mr. Grant changed his mind, and went to Long Branch, instead of going into the country."

Poor Marcia! Down toppled the last tower of her air-castle. How provoked she was! At Mr. Grant, though he wasn't to blame, and at John, and he wasn't to be blamed! And at herself, just a trifle, for being so foolish and headlong. "But, then," thought she, "I can make it all up with John!"

Who should go riding by that moment, but John, and Mary Larson, all in white, by his side.

Allow me to present my wife," said John, bowing to Marcia.

That was the feather's weight that broke the camel's back. Marcia couldn't keep back her tears any longer, but broke completely down and had a good cry. She had lost all around, and I think it was good enough for her.

The Red Queen.

A ROMANCE OF OLD FORT DU QUESNE.

BY BARTLEY T. CAMPBELL, AUTHOR OF "IN THE WEB," "LAURA'S PERIL," ETC.

CHAPTER IV. THE WARNING.

WHEN Colonel Joucaire reached the fort, which he did about an hour before sunset, he was, if possible, more angry than when he set out. He belonged to that class of men who nurse their wrath, and brood over wrongs, until what was at first but a trifling matter assumes gigantic proportions.

Striding past the sentinel, he crossed the parade ground with rapid steps, and entered his quarters—a neat, cosy cabin, with a long porch in front, and over the roof of which floated the flag of the proudest nation in Europe.

"Send De Villiere to me," he said to a soldier, who was doing duty at head-quarters.

The man bowed and withdrew, and the next instant Jean Paul De Villiere, a tall, dignified-looking young man, with dark eyes and a profusion of black hair, tied with a blue ribbon at the back, entered.

"Did you wish to see me, colonel?" he asked, seating himself, and speaking in an easy, familiar way.

"Yes," replied Joucaire. "I want you to do me a service."

"Count it done already," answered De Villiere, stroking his mustache. "But, what do you want me to do? Is it in the courting or cutting line? Am I to win hearts, or break heads?"

"Nonsense! De Villiere, I am not in a mood for jesting."

"I am surprised at that, then," replied De Villiere. "I thought you went down to see the English beauty. You usually come back in good humor from there."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Joucaire. "You will make me hate you, if you persist in trifling with me in this style. Bella Carlyon is a false jade, and even now she is giving my rival an audience."

"Your rival?"

"Yes, my rival!"

"Does he belong to the garrison?"

"No."

"An Indian tribe?"

"No; but an Englishman—a Marylander—who, from what I overheard, I learned was out here with Braddock, and now holds a captain's commission under Forbes."

"Under Forbes! Why, he has not yet crossed the mountains."

"True enough," answered Joucaire; "but this Captain Ashmore has been sent out in advance, as a spy I presume."

"What do you propose doing?"

"Doing!" exclaimed the commandant. "I intend to capture this fellow, and shoot him like a dog. He is a spy, and, as a spy, is deserving of death."

"And the girl?"

"As for her," said Joucaire, "I will take her and her family captives, for giving aid and comfort to the enemies of France, and, unless she consents to marry me, I will—well, I don't know what I'll do. The future must determine that."

"But, is this regular warfare, colonel?" put in De Villiere, with a smile.

"It matters little," was the answer. "With the Atlantic between us and civilization, French soldiers may do pretty much as they please. But, now, major, to business. To-night we must capture Ashmore and the Carlyons. The expedition will be in your charge, and on your discretion depends, in a great measure, its success."

"I will do my whole duty, colonel," replied De Villiere. "How many men do I take with me?"

"You can have twenty, or fifty, or even one hundred, if you think it necessary."

"Twenty will do," said De Villiere. "When do we start?"

"Immediately after dark."

"Then I will go and prepare for the expedition."

De Villiere arose, bowed politely, and withdrew.

When darkness came at last, and the lights gleamed everywhere throughout the fort, De Villiere and twenty men, ten of whom were Indians, crept out of the sally-port on the Monongahela river side of the fort, and, leaping into a half-dozen canoes, pushed out into the stream.

It was very dark on the river; and the sky, starless and without a moon, looked as black as velvet.

No caution was exercised by the expedition. All rested under the belief that they were in their own country; that there was not an enemy within a hundred miles at least, save the one they were now going in quest of, and so De Villiere permitted the Frenchmen to chant a boatman's song, and the Indians to whoop at will.

The little flotilla kept well out in the stream, taking advantage of the strong current of the Allegheny until the head of Brunot's Island was reached; then they dashed across to the mouth of Chartier's creek, and, obedient to De Villiere's command, the songs and whoops ceased and the party disembarked.

While they were mooring their boats, a light canoe darted into the mouth of the creek unperceived, and Tennessee, the Indian prophet, leaped ashore. With flying footsteps, he ran up the path, and, without waiting to knock, rushed into Roger Carlyon's cabin.

"What has happened?" exclaimed Roger, leaping to his feet, and noticing the excited manner of the prophet.

"Where is the pale-face captain?" asked Tennessee.

"Why do you wish to know?" asked Mrs. Carlyon, pale as death.

"Don't fear to tell me," replied Tennessee. "Have I not always been your friend? I come to save his life!"

"He has gone, then; he left here an hour ago for the camp of Allequippa," returned Roger.

"I'm glad of that, but you are in danger, Carlyon," said Tennessee. "Joucaire has sent a squad to arrest you and your family. They are already in the garden. I must not be seen here. If you are captured, I will see you at Du Quesne and try to serve you. Farewell!"

He was gone like a flash—as he always went, and Roger Carlyon, turning to his wife, said:

"That is a strange man—part Indian—part white. But he is our friend, and we must profit by his warning."

Saying this he took up his rifle, and calling his man servant, Peter McQuaide, who was lying asleep on the kitchen floor, he made him prepare to make a vigorous defense against their assailants.

"Faith an' I'll do that same, thin," replied the brave Milesian, as soon as the situation was made known to him.

Mrs. Carlyon begged of her husband to surrender at once and avoid bloodshed, but Roger Carlyon was a self-willed man, and he answered:

"No, wife, I'm no coward, and I'll show these rascally French that if they undertake to enter a man's household without warrant, they can not do so with impunity."

The woman knew that it was no use to try to persuade him, once he had made up his mind, and so she hurried up-stairs with wild eyes and blanched cheeks to where Bella sat, thinking of all the sweet promises Captain Ashmore had made her.

"Bella, my child, Joucaire is going to take us all prisoners," broke in Mrs. Carlyon, "and your father and Peter are going to shoot the first that enter the house. Oh, dear! Oh, dear!"

The young girl was terribly shocked, but she did not cry out as her mother did, and simply said:

"Father is right. If I were a man I should do the same thing."

"But, what are we to do?" exclaimed Mrs. Carlyon. "Oh, Bella, I wish I was as stout-hearted as you are."

"All we can do is to pray to God," answered the girl, and she dropped upon her knees. While her heart beat wildly with fear her lips moved in silent supplication to God for protection and aid.

CHAPTER V.

A PARADISE LOST.

WHILE this was going on up-stairs, below Roger Carlyon and Peter McQuaide were barricading the doors, closing the windows, and preparing for a vigorous defense. Just as they had completed these preparations, footfalls were heard without, and the next instant the door-knob was turned, and an attempt made from without to push in the door.

"Who's there?" demanded Roger, in a loud voice.

"Open the door!" called De Villiere.

"You must first tell me who you are, and what you want," answered the brave backwoodsman.

"We are a detachment from Fort Du Quesne," cried out De Villiere, "and we bid you to open your doors in the name of Louis, King of France."

"I do not recognize your authority to enter my dwelling at this unseasonable hour," was the reply of Roger, "and as I am a subject of George of England, I owe no allegiance to your master."

"You then refuse to permit us to enter?" shouted De Villiere.

"I do," was the response.

"Then we will batter your old shanty to pieces!"

"And I will shoot the first man that crosses that threshold."

This reply possibly did not reach the ears for which it was intended, as there was considerable confusion among the assailants caused by the efforts that were being made to drag a huge log up to use as a battering-ram.

Carlyon understood their tactics at once, and so he said, in a whisper to Peter:

"Get on the other side, and as soon as the door gives way fire and load again. I will reserve my shot until I see something to shoot at."

"Begorra, sir, I'll pop one or two uv the

sn'akin' divils, anyway. Thrust to a McQuaide for that, sir," said Peter, as he took his post, grasped his musket firmly in one hand, and a villainous-looking pistol in the other.

By this time the battering-ram was in position, and the next moment it came crashing against the door.

But it was of well-seasoned oak; and although it split in two places, it stood the test well.

Again and again the ram thundered against the oak, and at last the frame-work gave way, and the door fell into the middle of the floor, an ugly heap of debris.

They were about moving off, when the bushes on the left of the valley were pushed aside, and Tennessee stepped out into the moonlight.

They recognized the prophet at once, and Robert asked:

"Well, my good friend, what news?"

"Bad news—very bad news," answered Tennessee, with a shake of the head.

"Indeed? Of what nature?" Robert was very pale now.

"Roger Curlyon, his wife and daughter are prisoners in Fort Du Quesne, and Joucaire is searching the woods for you."

"What's to be done?" exclaimed the young man. "They must be rescued at once. I will go myself to Du Quesne and demand their release in the name of King George. They are his subjects. Joucaire dare not refuse to deliver them."

"My young friend," said the prophet, calmly, "you do not know this man. He is not guided by any high sense of honor, or the rules of civilized warfare. He claims that your presence here is evidence sufficient to convict you as a spy; and if you are captured, that will be your doom."

Ashmore saw the force of this at once, and so he said, in a rather dejected way:

"What is to be done?"

"I will attempt their rescue," said the prophet.

"But you must not endanger your life, while I skulk out of danger," replied Robert. "I could not permit you to do that."

"But I have more right to do so—even than you."

"Than I?"

"Yes; but I will tell you the story at another time. For the present we have weightier matters to look after."

"Can Allequippa do nothing for her friends?" asked the Queen.

"Nothing for the present," replied Tennessee. "Even were you able to lead your whole tribe against the fort, it would be unavailing. I have learned that Forbes' army is at Broadford, on the Yongiguan, and the Great Spirit will give him victory."

"If this is true, I will join my command, and, with the victorious army, enter Du Quesne and rescue Bella."

"That is the better plan," said the prophet. "The march from Broadford can only consume two or three days, and in the mean time I will see that no harm befalls the girl."

"You will not venture within the fort?" said Ashmore.

"Why not?" was the answer. "Tennessee is a prophet. The Great Spirit will protect him. Then, turning to Allequippa, he said: 'Let us go to the camp.'"

The trio parted there; the prophet and Allequippa taking the path leading into the ravine where their camp was situated, and Robert Ashmore turning off toward the Monongahela.

"I can not go up the river when Bella is in danger," he said, pausing, when he had gained an open space about one hundred yards from the river. "No; let the consequences be what they may, I will not do so."

These words had scarce escaped him, when there was a rustle in the long rank grass behind him, and before he could move a step, he was surrounded by a band of ten Indians, under command of De Villare.

Robert made an effort to draw his pistols, but ere he could do so, he was grasped from behind and pinned tightly.

"We missed you last night," said De Villare, with a sneer, "but we have you tight and fast now."

"By what right, pray, am I thus seized?" demanded Ashmore, facing the speaker.

"The right that every Frenchman has to seize an English spy," was the answer.

An angry retort sprung to the young captive's lips, but, realizing how useless argument would be, he shut his lips tightly, and suffered them to lead him off.

It was a long, wearisome road, and the morning was breaking in the east when the party reached the ramparts of the fort.

(To be continued.—Commenced in No. 156.)

Rocky Mountain Rob, THE CALIFORNIA OUTLAW; OR, The Vigilantes of Humberg Bar.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.
AUTHOR OF "THE WOLF DEMON," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED MAZEPPA," "A CHASE OF SPADERS," "HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," "A STRANGE GILL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.
DIGGING UP THE PAST.

KIDDER, naturally superstitious, like all men who trust to games of chance for their fortune, began to really ask himself if this veiled woman could possibly possess a knowledge of the future.

"Am I correct?" the fortune-teller demanded.

"Yes, that is exactly what I want to know; your guess is singularly correct," Kidder said, gracefully concealing his surprise.

"Do not try to break the bank; you will only lose your gold dust," the woman spoke decidedly.

Kidder looked annoyed.

The woman noticed the expression upon the face of the gambler in an instant.

"If you doubt my words, go and try your luck, and if the wily celestialists rake in your dust, perhaps then you'll believe that the fortune-teller can read the future."

"Well, Miss, I shall try before midnight whether your prediction be correct or not," Kidder retorted, with just a tinge of spite in his tone.

"Like the moth, you will fly into the light, even though the flame singe your wings," she said, in sarcasm.

"Oh, no; I'm more like the bat, in this case, whose wings flap out the light," Kidder answered, with a smile.

"You'll never break that bank!" the woman exclaimed. "The Chinamen know too much for you!"

"For ways that are dark," etc., hummed Kidder. "Oh, I don't fear. But, if you are correct, I shall be sorry. It will be a burning disgrace to the Bar if there's a Chinese monte bank which can't be broken by a decent white man."

"You are a scholar, are you not?" demanded the woman, suddenly.

Kidder was a little astonished at the question.

"Well, yes, I presume that I may be termed an educated man, if that is what you mean," the gambler replied.

"Call back to your memory the history of the intercourse of the Western nations with the so-called barbarians of the East—the sons of further India—the land of Prester John. In cunning the East has always beaten the West, and yielded only to the strong right arm of power. Here, amid these mountains, the story of the past will be repeated."

"I think I get your meaning," Kidder said, thoughtfully. "What the Johns win by the trick of cards, some desperado will wrest it from them by main force."

"Yes."

"Well, I believe that I have got all the information that I desire. If they break me tonight up the stream, I shall begin to believe that you are not a humbug but a genuine prophet. How much?"

"Five dollars."

Kidder handed over the money.

"I'll see you in the morning, colonel; good-evening, Miss," and Kidder departed.

"Hang me if the woman hasn't made quite an impression on me," he muttered, as he walked up the street. "I wouldn't have believed it possible." Then he examined his bag of gold dust. "Bout a hundred dollars," he said, thoughtfully. "I'll go that on the Johns' bank, just for greens," and he started up the stream toward the celestial settlement known as "the Chinese Camp."

The colonel and the veiled woman, left alone together, surveyed each other for a few moments in silence.

The old man was attempting to distinguish the woman's face beneath her thick veil, and she was contemplating him with a stern, yet sorrowful gaze.

"Can you read my thoughts as easily as you did his?" the colonel asked.

"You do not come to question concerning the future, but wish tidings of the past."

The old man started in amazement, exclaiming: "You must be a witch, indeed!"

The thick veil concealed the look of scorn which came over her face.

"I am a fortune-teller," she said, her voice cold and metallic.

"Well, since you have guessed so truly concerning my errand to you, it is needless for me to question you. Go on and tell me what I wish to know."

"Twenty-five years ago your wife left you."

Then the woman paused, as if to note the effects of her words.

An expression of pain came over the old man's face, and a half-checked sigh came from his lips. The memory of the past, even after so many years had elapsed, was painful.

When the look of pain came over his face, an expression of scornful joy shone in her dark eyes and curled the corners of her proud lips.

"Yes," the colonel said, after a very long pause, "go on; your knowledge is wonderful; I can not question its truth, although I may be astounded, and at a loss to guess from whence you have obtained it."

The fortune-telling sisterhood generally refer anxious inquirers to the stars and talk vaguely about the mystic knowledge which a seventh daughter gives unto a seventh daughter, but I say nothing. I will not fool with you in the jargon of my tribe, but merely say the knowledge is mine; you must own that it is correct, no matter what the source from whence I draw my inspiration. Now, then, question as to what you desire to know in regard to the woman who fled from you."

"Is she living?" the colonel asked, after a very long pause.

"No; she is dead."

A tone of sadness in the woman's voice touched a responsive chord in the old man's heart.

"Dead!" he repeated, and a single great tear rolled down the weather-beaten face. The memory of the only woman he had ever loved was still strong and fresh in the old soldier's heart. Forgotten now were all her faults—her fiery temper, rashness of action, her desperate flight from virtue and home; he only remembered that she had lain within his arms, that she was the mother of his child; the night of shame that had clouded her fair womanhood could not make him forget the glorious day of sunshine that had his being and his joy before the darkness came.

"Yes, she died in misery and despair." Again the cold, metallic voice—more masculine than feminine—fell discordantly upon the ears of the colonel.

"The fate that I predicted for her," he murmured, but he uttered the words in sadness, not in anger.

"The man, for whom she forgot every thing in the world except love, cruelly deserted her—abandoned his victim to want when he tired of her caresses, as all men will tire, some time. She did not die, then, for she had ties which bound her to the world despite her wish or will. For ten years she dragged out a weary existence—the cross was heavy, and at last the weight killed her."

"And the child—my baby girl?" the colonel asked, with eager, trembling lips.

"Who would protect the child, the mother gone?" the woman asked, angrily.

"She is dead, too?" and for a moment the colonel buried his head in his hands. The woman surveyed him with a cold and haughty smile.

"I can not understand it!" the colonel exclaimed, suddenly, raising his head. "I saw a young man to-day who was the living image of the unfortunate woman who in one mad hour wrecked two lives."

"John Rimee," said the fortune-teller, in a low, distinct voice.

The colonel started. "By heaven, you must deal in witchcraft!"

"Am I not a fortune teller?" she answered, scornfully. "And, after what I have told you, do you doubt my power?"

"No, no; I do not! I do not believe that news can come from the other world, but, I own, I can not guess the trick—the jugglery by means of which you know so much of me and mine."

"You saw in John Rimee's face a resemblance to the face of the woman whom you once called wife?" she said, evidently laboring under some strong mental excitement, and paying no attention to his doubting words.

"Yes, in his face I saw every feature of hers, the same hair, the same eyes, all reproduced!"

"You questioned him, and he made reply that his mother had died in France, and that his name was John Rimee."

"You must possess more than earthly power!" the colonel exclaimed, rising in excitement.

"You felt a strange interest in this beardless boy; no wonder, if there be any truth in the saying that blood is stronger than water, for, when you looked into that face, you looked upon your own flesh and blood. John Rimee is your child!"

The colonel sunk down into the chair as though stricken by a sudden blow.

CHAPTER XVII. A DESPERATE VENTURE.

Down through the darkness went Injun Dick. He died a thousand deaths all in an instant; for what is more terrible than a leap in the dark? The death he can boldly front is robbed of half its terrors.

As Dick went down, in the single instant all his past life trooped rapidly before him; he lived all his life over again!

Then—splash! and Talbot was floundering in a pool of water; a moment more and his feet touched bottom.

Satisfied that for the present he was safe, as far as the outlaws were concerned, he crawled from the pool and proceeded to examine the pit into which he had fallen.

At first the terrible thought came to him that he had simply fallen into a cavity in the rock

in which the water had collected, and which had but one outlet, the way he had come. If so, then, he had but escaped death for a few hours only, and he must perish miserably in the trap into which he had fallen.

But he soon made a discovery that caused the blood to leap freer in his veins. He was standing in a current of running water. No well-hole, then, hollowed in the solid rock, but a channel worn by a subterranean stream.

The chance of escape grew better and better. A volume of water which filled a channel several feet deep by six or eight in width, must require quite an opening to pass through and escape from the mountain.

But, if like the sink of Carson river, the stream suddenly disappeared in the ground, and the solid rock barred his way? Ah! an exploration alone could determine the truth.

With the stream then, following the current, Talbot went. For a quarter of a mile at least the entire water-course wound its way through the very heart of the mountain. Every now and then the rocks would so close in that Talbot would be compelled to almost completely immerse himself in the water to crawl through, and then again, the passage would swell up in huge arches like the dome of some vast cathedral.

In the darkness—more dense than any that night's dark veil could cast over the earth—the daring adventurer could only judge of the extent of the passage through which his feet were forced to pass, by the touch of his outstretched hands from side to side, and the echoes of the gurgling waters resounding in the rocky gallery above.

At last he came to a halt; he could walk on no further. Around and about him on every side, except by the way by which he had come, the massive rock closed in upon him. The passage had ended!

His stream, Talbot discovered after a careful scrutiny with his hands, escaped through a jagged passageway, evidently in the first place but a mere fissure in the rock, but widened year after year by the power of the mountain torrent.

The opening was but a little over three feet in diameter, and, being smaller than the body of the current, had forced the water back like a dam till it formed a pool. In the pool Talbot was standing.

Only one chance of escape from the terrible doom which stared him in the face remained—that of a headlong plunge through the hidden passage in the rock, trusting to the force of the current to carry him through, and to the hope that, before many feet were passed, the passage would widen out again and give him air.

It was a desperate risk, for, if the passage turned abruptly in its course, or was obstructed by rocks, death by drowning would surely come.

Thrice Dick measured with his hand the rift in the rock; then, drawing in a good, long breath, he gave himself to the rapid current.

The water, forced into a channel smaller than its volume, was rushing on with a mill-slice. Small chance was there for thought, yet Dick realized as he was carried swiftly onward that he went either to freedom or to sudden death.

Ten seconds only was Dick Talbot beneath the surface of the stream, though it seemed to him like ten hours, when, like a great monster sporting with its prey, it vomited him forth into the daylight through the mountain's side.

Talbot gazed the bank of the little pool into which the stream flowed after it gushed out from the mountain's side; then it flowed over, breaking up into two streams, each one of which cuts its way in time to the Wisdom river.

Talbot, as he sat upon a rock in the clear, cold moonlight, was not an object calculated to excite envy, although he would have undoubtedly attracted much attention, even from the roughly-attired citizens of the Humberg valley.

His drenched clothes were tattered and torn, his head and hands were torn and bleeding from contact with the rocks.

"Well, this is a nice pickle," Talbot exclaimed, as he surveyed himself. He was shivering, too, for the spring was not far advanced, and the night-winds which blew over the snow-clad peaks of the rocky range were tempered with the chill of the mountain's top.

"I wonder where I am, anyway?" he queried, as he looked around him. The surroundings were not familiar. "Perhaps I have come out on the north side of the mountain? That is hardly possible, though, for the distance I have come underneath the rock was not enough to carry me to the other side of the divide. These streams must flow into the Wisdom then. By following one of them to the river I can reach the valley, for I am not below the Bar, I am certain."

Then came a sound to Talbot's ears which raised him from the rock upon which he sat, as though the stone had suddenly become red-hot.

The noise came from the mountain side, and from human throats. The sound of men's voices gave Talbot more alarm than if he had heard the hiss of a rattlesnake, or the screams of an angry panther crouched for its deadly spring.

He realized at once that the men from whom he had so recently escaped, the desperate road-agents, were near at hand.

To fly with noiseless speed to the cover of the nearest pines was Talbot's instant movement, then he crouched to the ground, and, hidden by the shadows, he watched.

A sense of fierce joy filled the breast of Injun Dick. A few minutes more and the secret of the entrance to the cave would be in his keeping. If fate pleased that he should escape his present peril, and once again he should stand amid the sturdy miners of Humberg, he would lead such a force of red-skirted avengers to the haunt of the road-agents as would sweep them from the earth.

"Aha; I told you, my outlaw friend, that the game was not ended yet," Talbot muttered between his teeth. "Two hours ago it was your turn; two days more and it may be mine. I'll win that thousand dollars yet from that Bannock sharp, and I won't willingly agree, even now in my present perilous position, to double the bet!"

Then from a little clump of bushes, which masked the entrance to the robbers' retreat, came three of the road-agents, and straight onward they came toward Talbot's hiding-place.

CHAPTER XVIII. A LEGACY OF HATE.

The words of the fortune-teller astonished the colonel. He could hardly believe the evidence of his ears.

"Is it possible?" he cried; "this man, John Rimee, can not be a child of mine."

"He is," replied the veiled woman, decidedly. "But he himself told me, only this morning, that he was born in France."

"A lie to deceive you."

"But why should he wish to deceive me?" questioned the colonel; "I was to him a stranger. How could he guess that I really took any serious interest as to who or what he was?"

"Hate lasts long!" the fortune-teller said, slowly. "The wrong you did the mother lives yet in the memory of the child. John Rimee recognized you the moment his eyes fell upon

your face, and yet you were the last person in the world that he expected to see. He little thought that Colonel Jacks, the Montana miner, was the United States officer who won such a brilliant record in Mexico, and on the Indian frontier. He thought that you were dead; thought not that fate destined the child to revenge the mother's wrongs."

The colonel looked at the veiled woman in utter surprise.

"I beg your pardon, madam," he said, "but you have been greatly misinformed. Twice within the last few minutes you have spoken of my wronging the woman who was once my wife. Of course I can not guess as to the source of your information, but you have been deceived. But before I come to that, let me ask you a few questions. How can this young man, John Rimee, be my son? The child that the woman who fled from me carried with her was a baby girl."

"I can not explain," the woman said, impatiently, "but it is the truth. He is your son."

"And the child of my former wife?" the colonel asked, puzzled.

"Yes."

"I think that you are wrong; he is too old; we'll let that pass. Now, madam, is your knowledge of the past sufficient to tell me in what way I wronged the unfortunate woman who once bore my name?" he asked, calmly.

"Yes, you treated her cruelly, brutally, and to avoid such treatment she fled. There was a bitterness in the tone of the woman which strangely astonished the colonel.

"No, madam!" he said, promptly, "you are wrong; she fled from me because I was a ruined man—because for her sake I had committed a crime which, if it had been discovered, would have cost me my commission, and drove me, a dishonored man, from the United States army. The money belonging to the men of my regiment—trusting to my care, I squandered, foolishly, madly, upon her. She knew that I was ruined—knew that each moment was likely to bring the discovery which would cover me with shame. And knowing this, she fled; fled with a man who was rich, who was able, as she thought, to minister to her reckless caprices. And then, when the day came that he was penniless too, she deserted him for another, and so she went on, until at last the dark angel cut her down in her career of guilt. This is the truth, madam."

The angel of the past rising from the tomb deflected the memory of the woman who can not now speak in her own defense," replied the fortune-teller, just a little theatrically.

"The angel of the past lies, madam, if he or she, whichever it may be—says that I speak a single word other than the truth, when I declare, as Heaven is my witness, that that woman was the spoiled darling of my heart; that I denied her nothing, and ruined myself for her. And even now, so strong in my withered-up old heart is the old-time love that once I bore her, that my voice shakes and my eyes fill when I think of the years that are gone. And mind you, madam, I do not forget how vile, how utterly unworthy she was of the name of woman."

"A man never does wrong in this world; it is always the woman," she replied, bitterly.

"I do not say that, madam!" he exclaimed, quickly. "In this affair I do not claim that I was an angel, not even that I was a saint; but the statement that I drove that woman to a career of shame is utterly false. And now, madam, since you are so well informed regarding the events of the past, tell what has become of my Isabel, my baby girl, that that bad woman stole from me."

"She was her mother!" the fortune-teller said, firmly.

"And has a father no right to his child?" he asked, "because a man is rougher in action and ruder in speech than a woman, does it follow that the holiest instincts of nature must be dead within his breast?"

"Presume not," the woman said, reluctantly.

"But can you answer the question that I have just asked?"

"Yes."

"Ah," and an expression of joy appeared on the stern face of the old man. "Speak, I implore you; does she live?"

"Isabel, your child, is dead," the fortune teller replied, coldly.

The colonel was staggered by the blow.

"I had no reason to hope that she was living," he moaned, "but, like a dream, I have cherished the thought that I might be permitted to see her once again before I bid good-night to this world."

"You will never see her!" The voice of the woman was as cold and metallic as the ring of steel.

"And this young man; when I meet him I will question him," the colonel said; "I shall speedily discover whether you have spoken the truth or not. I do not, and can not, believe that he is a son of mine, although his face is strangely like the one now resting in the quiet repose of the tomb."

The veiled woman shook her head. "You will not learn any thing from him."

"And why not?" the colonel demanded.

"A promise given to the dead seals his lips."

"Given to the woman who was my wife?"

"Yes."

"I can not understand this strange affair at all." The old man betrayed his amazement.

"And you will never understand it," the woman rejoined, decidedly. "You would never have learned what you have, but for the strange chance of fortune which brought me here. And now, be satisfied with the knowledge you have gained. The girl, Isabel, whose soft heart might have forgiven you for your part in the events of the past, and in her place John Rimee lives, who remembers only that his mother, with her dying breath, counseled him never to seek his father; asked him, as he loved the woman who had so carefully reared him, to even deny his existence if he should ever meet his father face to face. He will not forget that promise."

"Madam, I think that you are romancing, now," the colonel said, gravely, and evidently incredulous. "I can not believe that any human being could wish to leave such a legacy of hate behind. But, as for this young man, the next time I meet him, within five minutes I'll learn the truth. If he is my child—which I doubt—I defy him to keep the truth from me."

"We shall see," the woman replied, coldly.

"How much, madam?" the colonel asked.

"Nothing," replied the fortune-teller, half-contemptuously.

"I beg your pardon, madam!" cried the old man, shortly. "I am not in the habit of taking any one's wares without paying for them. I do not imagine that you can carry on the trade of fortune-telling for the fun of the thing, neither do I imagine that you live upon air. You received five dollars from Mr. Kidder, and I am quite sure that the information which you have given me is worth at the least double the amount he paid."

"Am I not at liberty to receive or refuse, as I please?" demanded the woman, impatiently.

"No, madam; in this case you are not," answered the colonel, with considerable sharpness in his tone. "By refusing to take pay for your information you place me under an obligation, and I do not choose to remain your debtor in

the least. Therefore I insist that you name the sum which I ought to pay you."

"I tell you again that I will not accept money from you!" the woman exclaimed, strangely agitated.

"And I tell you that you must and shall!" replied the colonel, promptly. Then he took a ten-dollar gold-piece from his pocket and threw it on the table. "There, madam!" he exclaimed; "now we are quits!"

"I shall

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hands in agony. Then he plunged after him, first giving a second warning cry.

Caleb Starling had half lost consciousness, and was in that dreamy state when the worst of death is over, when he felt the powerful clutch of Bill Arden upon him, and they rose together to the surface. Holding him by the hair, at arm's length, Bill shouted again, and saw the ship come slowly to the wind, while a line of heads was seen along the rail. A rope was thrown to him, and after making the mate fast to it, he swam to the chains, and was on deck almost as soon as the half-drowned man.

Starling was not a bad man, but a long life as an officer of a whaler had hardened him. As he came back to life, his first question was, "Who saved me?"

"Bill Arden," replied one of the men.

Starling rose feebly and staggered to the place where Bill stood, still dripping from his hair.

"I've saved you badly, Bill," he said, "and you have taken a noble revenge. Will you forgive me?"

They shook hands then and there. He had a lucky voyage, and when we came out again, Starling was captain, and a better officer from that fearful hour, as mate and captain, never sailed from any port. And when Bill Arden was killed by a whale, off the Greenland coast, Captain Starling was the man who placed his family beyond the chance of want.

So much for "Bill Arden's Revenge."

Cat and Tiger:

OR,
THE STAR OF DIAMONDS.
A ROMANCE OF LOVE AND MYSTERY.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "BLACK HAND," "IRON AND GOLD," "RED SCORPION," "PEARL OF PEARLS," "HERULETS," "HUNCHBACK," "FLAMING TALISMAN," "BLACK CRESCENT," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.—CONTINUED.

"THERE ONCE lived in the city of London," Carline commenced, "a very wealthy merchant, whose name was Waldorf Cerey. He was a man of violent passions, yet who, when he loved, could love as few men can. He was a bachelor; and, at the time of which I speak, had taken a young and beautiful girl from a home of poverty and made her his housekeeper. Her name was Lona. After awhile he came to love this girl; and, finally, he married her. She appeared to make him a good wife, and they lived very happily together.

"But, this seeming happiness was not to last. Lona had had a lover before she became the wife of Waldorf Cerey; and this love was not quenched at the time she married her benefactor—nor was it ever buried.

"By her he had a son. When this son was two years old, Waldorf discovered certain things that made him doubt his wife's constancy; one of which was a letter signed 'Clayford.' There was no date to the epistle; but he saw that the writing was fresh; it was addressed to his wife in affectionate terms, and among other things, its author said: 'I will soon return, dear Lona, when, after this long and dreary separation, we may be reunited in our love. For I have been prosperous, and have a home of luxury to offer her whom another had nearly robbed me of.' There was so much in this to excite the husband's suspicions, that he thereafter watched his wife closely. Six months later, he discovered her in a private interview with this man named Clayford, though she was not aware of the violence of the wronged husband. And the object of the meeting was to plot an elopement for a date when he (Clayford) should return to London, after three months' absence on important business.

"Having made sure of his wife's perfidy, Waldorf Cerey was enraged. As he had loved, he now hated her. And hate with him was terrible. He did not betray his knowledge of the abominable plot, but secretly nursed his burning passion, and resolved upon a fearful course.

"He went to a jeweler, and gave him the design for a costly ornament—a star, to be wrought of diamonds and gold wire intermingled.

"Ah!" exclaimed Waldorf Cerey, breaking in, "here is the origin of the star—with Waldorf Cerey, the injured husband. Now, then, for the part he played? Go on, Carline."

Carline resumed: "When the star was completed, Waldorf Cerey took it from the jeweler, and sought the shop of a poverty-stricken apothecary. And it was because the apothecary was poor that he went to him. He offered him an enormous sum—a fortune—if he would compound a deliciously-odorous something, which, if kept beneath the nostrils of a person for two hours, would be sure death to the one inhaling it. The apothecary agreed. More: when the merchant showed him the star, he proposed to take it, and impregnate it with the poisonous stuff.

"Winter had come. There was a grand ball gotten up by one of the merchant's friends, and Waldorf Cerey and his wife were among the invited guests. Just before leaving their residence, he presented her with the star, and requested her to wear it upon her bosom. She was in ecstasies of delight over the gift, and caressed him fondly while she thanked him for the gem. It was the last time she ever embraced him; for from the moment they entered their carriage, the deadly fragrance began its work.

"By eleven o'clock, she complained of being sleepy. At midnight, the company was thrown into great consternation by seeing her suddenly fall prostrate, in the midst of a dance. She never spoke one word from the time she fell. Among the party was a physician. He pronounced life extinct. Her death, it was generally supposed, was caused by over-excitement. But the grave physician had suspicions, though he was silent. He had detected the peculiar fragrance with which the Star of Diamonds was pregnant; and while he at once concluded that it was a case of poisoning, he was not sufficiently satisfied to warrant the expression of an opinion.

"When Waldorf Cerey, in company with the physician, conveyed his dead wife homeward, he contrived—as he thought, unperceived—to slip the star into his overcoat pocket.

"Lona had been buried just ten days, when the merchant—satisfied with his vengeance, and believing his horrible act concealed—began to experience a strange illness. He lost flesh rapidly; his face, usually full and flushed, became sallow and haggard. He was frightened; for he could not account for his condition. He was forced to his bed, and sent for a physician—who happened to be the same gentleman that accompanied him home on the night of the death of Lona. His name was Horace Stafford.

"The physician attended him regularly. But it was soon evident that Waldorf Cerey could not live. He called Horace Stafford to his bedside, one day, and said he knew he was dying, and must make a confession. Imagine his surprise, when Stafford informed him that it was unnecessary—he knew all. He went to the wardrobe and took the star from the mer-

chant's overcoat pocket—where it had remained, really forgotten, since the night he took it from his dead wife's bosom.

"Holding it up before the dying man, Stafford said: 'See, Waldorf Cerey! the same instrument of your wife's death has been yours. Unknowingly, you have, day after day, in small quantities, inhaled the deadly fragrance that is in this star. I guessed what ailed you; but, when you called me in, you were past all power of remedy. It is retribution!'

"Waldorf Cerey died. The physician learned from him, ere he breathed his last, the whereabouts of the apothecary; and seeking him, and ascertaining, by means of threats, exactly what it was the star contained, he at last succeeded in abstracting the poisonous perfume. He kept the star. It was never again seen in public.

"I will tell you, here, that Everard, the son of Waldorf Cerey, married when he reached the age of twenty-one. In this marriage, he had a daughter, who was named Helene. She (Helene) now lives in New Orleans, is wealthy, is an orphan—a belle of society.

"Horace Stafford was a married man, at the time of Waldorf Cerey's decease. He had a daughter. That daughter grew up, and was married to one Ruy Mandoro, in the same year that Everard Cerey was married. I, you know, am the daughter of Ruy Mandoro and Nora Stafford. But now of the star again.

"Though my grandfather had cleansed the gem, and made it harmless, it would seem that fatality was to be its history. One morning, when Mrs. Stafford—my mother's mother—was in her room, she had occasion to procure something from her bureau. The box containing the star was kept in the top drawer—as I have been keeping it. As she opened the drawer, the lid of the box flew wide—as it did with me to-day. Within twenty-four hours, as she was descending the stairs, carrying a small fruit-salver with a knife on it, she tripped, and the knife, in some way, pierced the unfortunate woman to the heart.

"After that, my mother took the star, and with an engraver's chisel cut my name on the back of it. But, you see, dear Wart, I have cause to feel uneasy. Nearly every one who has had the star has been unfortunate—my mother being the only exception. And to-day the lid flew open, as it did when it foretold the death of my mother's mother."

"Let us throw the accursed thing away!" cried Wart Gomez, when she had concluded, and seeming deeply impressed with what he had heard.

"No," said Carline, slowly. "I promised my mother, when she died, that I would retain it as long as I lived, and give it to my eldest child, who should do the same. It was an unkind request; but I gave my promise, and, come what may, I shall keep it."

"Then do not let it disturb you. Forget what happened this morning—and fear nothing."

But, even as Wart Gomez spoke the encouraging words, there came a loud knock at the door.

He was first to recover from the start of surprise; this unexpected summons caused, and arose to see who the caller was.

A man stood upon the threshold—a figure dressed in black, and who wore a mask of like color.

"Who are you?" demanded Gomez.

"Your enemy!" was hissed in reply.

"I know you, Cor—"

"Then fight to save yourself, coward!" and with the words, the masked man sprang forward, a knife-blade gleaming in his hand.

The two closed in a deadly struggle, and backward and forward they went, overturning the chairs and tearing the carpet as they fought; for Gomez, though unarmed, proved himself a formidable adversary.

Zetta stood like one petrified; then uttering a cry, fainting away, while the child clung to her, screaming.

Carline's face was very white; but she was herself. She grasped up a heavy cane that stood in one corner, and bounded to the aid of her husband.

The cane twirled in the air, over the panting combatants—then descended, inflicting a ghastly wound on the head of the assassin—as Zetta uttered a piercing shriek and sunk, lifeless, to the floor.

The wearer of the mask, enraged to madness by the wound from the cane, next struck at Carline with his red knife.

"Now for that star that is so valuable!" cried the wretch; and he dashed up the stairs—for it was he who had looked in and listened at the window, during Carline's recital.

He was not long finding the jewel.

As he descended the stairs, he was met by Carline. Came in hand, she disputed his progress.

"Cortez Mendoza!—murderer!" she screamed, "you have killed my husband!"

"Ho! But I am not Cortez Mendoza!" bel- lowed the masked man.

At the same time, ere she could bring down the cane that was poised above her, she was struck by a huge, merciless fist.

He grasped her up in his arms and fled from the house by the back way. Zetta had recovered from her swoon; she was at the door, and: "Help! Help! Help!" was shrieked on the stillness of the night, in piercing accents.

The alarm spread quickly.

In a brief space, an angry crowd was in hot pursuit of the murderer.

They pressed him closely. He was compelled to drop his burden, which he did, exclaiming, with a curse:

"Devil take it! I have made a botch of this. I hope I have not killed her, too. Now then, whelps, come on!"

Relieved of his impediment, he soon eluded those who pursued him.

The house of Wart Gomez was closed and gloomy.

A week had passed. Gomez had been buried; and Zetta, the maid, with Zuelo, the child, were the sole occupants of the dwelling.

Carline had disappeared.

Much of the excitement that ensued upon the bold, yet fiendish deed, had subsided; but the authorities were vigilant, and their detectives were hard at work trying to ferret out the murderer.

Zetta, the maid, had fainted ere she had time to imagine who it was with whom her master struggled, and she had not heard her mistress cry out the words of recognition, when she disputed the assassin's progress on the stairway; else her evidence might, or might not, have let loose the sleuth-hounds of the law on the right scent.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WORK OF THE DEADLY ROSE.

So great was the enmity existing between Pedro Gomez and his son, that the former did not attend the funeral of the murdered man.

Moreover, and independent of this enmity, Pedro did not wish to be absent from his post in the garden.

He knew that his young mistress, Florese, sometimes walked alone among the flowers in the shady paths, and upon one of these occa-

sions he meant to fulfill his promise to the beautiful fiend who had agreed to give him three thousand dollars for administering the poison through the deadly rose.

But with all his watchfulness, the desired opportunity had not yet presented itself.

Florese had wandered there, near him, many times; but she was never alone—either her father or some visitor being her companion.

It was now the last day of the week in which he had sworn to perform the fearful task—three days after the tragedy at the house of his son and enemy—which, we neglected to state definitely, was situated at a point quite near the New Orleans and Carrollton railroad. And he began to fear that he would not be able to do what he had promised in the time specified.

Besides being the last day, one-half of that day was gone; for he and the men under him were working, at this moment, after their noon rest.

"Satan is sporting with me!" he would growl, as he plied his spade and glanced toward the house. "Here it is a week since I made my bargain, and I have done nothing. The time is up, and I shall lose my three thousand golden dollars! And my beautiful new mistress! By the devil! I shall lose her, too! And I shall still be Pedro Gomez, the poor gardener—instead of Gomez, the gentleman, and the husband of the devil-of-an-angel! Too bad! How hard I work! That contract which, after fifteen years, would give her to me for a wife—what a pity! Tut! tut! I am mad when I think of the good luck slipping through—oh! O-h-o!"

As Pedro soliloquized thus regretfully, he stopped short, opened his eyes, and looked steadfast toward a clump of tall shrubs.

It was a shady, perfumed bower his own hands had wrought, with a large, easy, reclining seat; and on this seat, reading a book, was Florese Earncliffe—a picture of beauty in a hallowed precinct.

"Ho!" he exclaimed, under his breath, "she is here at last! Now, how did she get there without my seeing her? and when did she come? No matter: since she is there, that is enough for Pedro Gomez. Now for the rose. The vital?—ah! it is here."

He plucked a large red rose from a bush near him, and—turning his back toward his intended victim, that he might not, by a chance observation, see what he was at—he let fall precisely three drops from the tiny vial onto the center of the blushing petals.

"Now, by the devil!" he muttered, "I must not let this cursed thing get too close to my own nose, else Pedro Gomez, instead, will fall dead in his tracks!"

Restoring the vial to his breast-pocket, he held the rose behind him, and advanced toward the lovely girl.

Hearing his step on the hard walk, she looked up.

"Ah, Pedro!" with a sweet smile, "you see I am enjoying the bower you made for me. It is a delightful little retreat. How do you do, to-day?"

"Well enough, Mistress Florese. I hope you are the same," bowing, in his awkward way, and letting his tattered hat in one hand.

"While he bowed, he was saying, to himself: 'What an admirable place! No one will see me hand her the rose—she will smell of it—she will fall—and I can crush the thing with my foot. Then I will cry for help—and all is well done. Yes, it is admirable! I will get my three thousand dollars! I will try to live for fifteen years, and marry the beautiful devil-of-an-angel who employs me! Oh, how very admirable!'

"Those were nice flowers you sent me to wear in my hair at the soiree last evening, Pedro. I should have thanked you for them sooner. You merit a great deal of praise for the way in which you have managed our garden."

"I have but, done my best to please, Mistress Florese. I think I have earned my pay; but I seek no praise," with another bow, very low and very humble.

"You have made a little Paradise for us. So, you must receive thanks, as well as money; and especially from me—for, oh! I do love to see the roses blooming so handsomely."

"Will you accept this from me?" he asked. "I am only a poor gardener, yet I love my labor, and I sometimes see good things in its fruits. It is this."

He held the rose toward her, and bowed again.

"How beautiful! Thank you, Pedro."

Helene Cerey was not wrong when she informed the gardener what would be the effect produced in the one who should smell of the poisoned rose.

When Florese received his offering, she immediately raised it to her pretty face, and inhaled the perfume of the deep-dyed petals. Pedro, who watched her, saw her start and glance at him, as if in surprise from some cause.

"Why, Pedro, what a strange fragrance! But, how delicious!"

"Very strange; and it was because of that—" Pedro began, when he perceived her eyes suddenly drop—the rose fell from her hand—she swayed dizzily.

"Pedro! Pedro!—that rose is poisoned! You—you did—"

Quick as a flash, he snatched up the fatal thing, and, following the instructions of his fiend mistress, held it close to the nostrils of the young girl, while he supported her sinking form.

"Pedro!" The voice was scarce louder than a startled whisper.

"Ho, there! Reno! Diaz! Help!—help, here!" and, while he called for assistance, he crushed the tell-tale rose beneath the heel of his boot.

The men dropped their spades and came running.

Mistress Florese has been stung by a serpent!" he explained, affecting much excitement. "Help me with her."

They bore her carefully in their arms in the direction of the house.

Elsor Earncliffe, from the interior, saw them approaching.

To him the sight was terribly significant; it told that something had befallen his child. With mind harassed by gnawing fears, he rushed to the doorway.

"My daughter!" he gasped, staring wildly from one to another of the men; "what has happened to her? Speak!"

Pedro Gomez explained that she must have been stung by a serpent while reading in the garden.

He exhibited one of the wrists of the lifeless girl, and there was an irritated puncture visible, close to one of the blue veins, which made his story plausible.

Ah! cunning, devilish Gomez! He was shrewd as he was wicked. The puncture was from the point of his sharp knife, and the redness surrounding it was the result of his rubbing a poisonous leaf briskly into the wound.

The family physician was summoned immediately.

When the medical gentleman arrived, he saw that he had been called in to gaze upon a corpse.

Elsor Earncliffe stood near to the doctor—his eyes fairly starting, his face white and fearful, and whole men that of one who dreads the announcement of some terrible truth.

"Well? Well?" he panted, grasping the physician's arm. "Tell me—the worst!"

"She is dead," was the sad, hesitating answer.

"Dead? Oh, Heaven!"

Elsor Earncliffe, in his declining years, had made his only child, Florese, the pet, the idol of his fondest hopes. This shock cut like a dagger-thrust to his heart.

As he cried out these words, he sunk to the floor, as if he had been shot.

He never spoke again. Helene Cerey, the beautiful fiend, and Pedro Gomez, her tool, had apparently two deaths to answer for at the great tribunal of judgment.

But the physician had examined the wound on the wrist. He had heard the story of the serpent, which Pedro inquired. He knew that the puncture was not the consequence of a bite or a sting, but did perceive that it was inflicted with a sharp instrument of some kind.

He was quick to suspect. He suspected foul play. His suspicion turned upon Pedro Gomez, the one who had first been seen with Florese, who was most loud in his lamentations, and who was rather over-persistent in telling the story of a possible serpent in the garden.

And, though he did not know it, Pedro Gomez was under detective surveillance within two hours after the tragedy—the result of a visit paid by the doctor to the Chief of Police, where he freely expressed his belief that Florese Earncliffe had come to her death through a conspiracy, by which poison was administered.

CHAPTER X. THE TRAP SET.

HELENE CEREY could love, and she could hate—qualities inherited, it will be seen, from her grandfather, Waldorf Cerey.

It was late in the afternoon of the third day after the death of her rival and victim, Florese Earncliffe, being one week subsequent to the murder of Wart Gomez.

As she had told Pedro, she would, she heard of the calamity, soon after its happening, without his apprising her.

And we find her, twice beautiful in the flush of her wicked triumph, walking to and fro in the room where she had bargained with the gardener for the performance of the fiendish deed that was to put out a young life in the very vigor of its usefulness, and deprive a doting parent of the sole earthly idol of his affection.

Society had been overwhelmed by the suddenness of this singular death; strange surmises were whispered among the grave and suspicious. But, Helene Cerey, the heartless instigator of the foul crime that had been committed, felt secure in her gulf, and inwardly laughed while her voice arose with others in surprise and regret.

Within the hour, she had returned from the graves of father and child; she had not yet cast aside the rich suit of black which she wore to further display her hypocritical grief. But, with crimsoned face, excited breath, and lustrous eyes burning in their glance, she smiled, she laughed, she exclaimed:

"Alas! Alas! It is all over now! Sleep peacefully, Florese, my pretty rival. Heaven is not half so unkind as this world, even in moments of greatest happiness. You brought the weapon of my hate to bear upon you; though, poor thing! you little dreamed how Helene Cerey suffered in your victories, nor that she meant you ill. Once—" and her tone sunk low, as she paused and gazed thoughtfully down at the carpet, "my heart fluttered; I wavered in what I had planned, and thought—a foolish thought!—of recalling Pedro Gomez to tell him to desist. It was my purer nature, then—pooh! You stood between Dwyer Allison and me; that was sufficient. Now he is free. He must be mine! He must! Perhaps it will not be so difficult to win him, after all."

She went to the desk and began to write.

In a few moments she had penned a note as follows:

"LXR of hope! \$300 for a love-powder. Send this evening at 8 precisely."

Then she wrote, on another sheet:

"MR. DWYER ALLISON: I extend to you my sympathies in this sad sorrow. But I feel, with others, that we have lost one who was endeared to all who knew her, and whose absence forever from our now grieving circle will always be realized as a deprivation of what was more than loved. I would speak with you. I have a matter of importance to communicate. Will you please call to-morrow evening at 8:30?"

"HELENE CEREY."

The first, which had neither name at the top nor signature at the bottom, she inclosed in a sealed envelope, and addressed to Cortez Mendoza, No. 1—Willow street.

Ringling a bell, she said to the maid who answered her summons:

"Ola, you know where to find the shop of Mendoza, the Quack?"

"Yes, my lady."

"On Willow street. Here is a note I wish you to deliver to him."

As she received the note, the maid was wondering:

"What can my lady be at? What business can she have with the old Quack?"

Be careful that you are alone with Cortez Mendoza, when you hand him the missive. Be careful that you do not speak to any one of this errand. Finally, do not attempt to pry into the secrets and affairs of your mistress. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, my lady."

"For, Ola—and the beauty fixed her dark eyes piercingly on the girl, "if you neglect to pay close heed to what I have said, it may bring you before the law."

"The law, my lady!" in astonishment.

"Yes—it is not pleasant to be dragged into the witness stand, is it, Ola?"

"Certainly not, my lady," a little nervously.

"And you would be dragged there if you disregard my instructions."

"I?"

"Yes. I would make public what I heard you say to the hall-servant last night. You told him there was a rumor afloat that Florese Earncliffe had been foully dealt with—and you believed it. If you do not follow my directions exactly, I will feed that rumor, by saying that I have a maid who believes the report, and expresses her opinion as if she knew more about it than she dare betray. You see? Then an investigation by the authorities, and you will have to explain upon what ground you based your bold opinions. All very unpleasant. It would make you notorious, and injure your good name eventually. Be advised by me. Go now, and before you leave the house, send Mijo here."

The maid withdrew in a tremble, for the accent of voice, the significant speech, the threatening glitter of the dark eyes, with all of which Helene Cerey warned her to "be careful," made her feel very uneasy.

Shortly after the girl's departure, Mijo, a young mulatto, entered the apartment. To him she gave the second note, addressed to Dwyer Allison, and bade him carry it with dispatch.

The two notes sent on their missions, Helene once more gave herself up to the rejoicings of her heart over the safe removal of her rival.

It was when night had drawn upon the city that the hall-servant announced a visitor—in the vestibule.

"In the vestibule! Who is it?" exclaimed and asked Helene.

"I do not know who it is, my lady; but though he is dressed passably, his face is vulgar, and he has a voice like the growl of a beast."

"It is Pedro Gomez! He is here in answer to the sign I gave him to-day, when my barouche passed," she thought; and then, aloud: "Show him up here."

"Up here, my lady?"

"Don't make me speak twice! You heard what I said."

"Yes, my lady."

When alone she went to one side, and drew apart a portion of the tapestry, which concealed what appeared to be the door of a closet, but which was an entrance to an adjoining room.

Opening this door, she called loudly: "Sh! Are you there?"

"Yes," answered more than one voice, guardedly.

"Remember," she added, "when I clap my hands three times," and reclosed the hidden door.

"Now, Pedro Gomez, I will attend to you."

She took something from the small desk, and slipped it quietly into her pocket. Then she listened to the footsteps that were approaching along the hall without.

Had Pedro Gomez known of, been able to see, or capable of imagining, the expression of meaning and danger that dwelt just then in the features of her who awaited his appearance, it is probable he would have hesitated before advancing beyond the doorway of the tapestried room.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 154.)

TO ADVERTISERS.

A few advertisements will be inserted on this page at the rate of fifty cents per line, nonpareil measurement.

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HOW TO FASCINATE and gain the respect, admiration, undying love and affection of any person you wish. Mailed for 10 cents

A SPRING LAY.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

When tender Spring returns again,
And joys on every hand beset me,
I love to wander through the woods,
Where'er my choicest corn will let me.

I love to see the bright buds burst
And mark how fast the leaves are growing,
When all the blossoms on the trees
Are, somewhat like my neighbor, blowing.

I love to chase the painted frog
That in the sunshine's golden hour
Disports its bright and gaudy wings,
And gathers sweets from every flower.

How sweet to watch the humming top
From rose to rose as it is swinging!
How sweet from every limb to hear
The joyous tadpoles softly singing!

I hear the bleating of the doves:
I hear the lambskins sweetly cooing;
I hear the gander's plaintive voice:
And hear the little geese meowing;

I hear the little kittens crow:
I hear the little calves a-neighing;
I hear the barking of the dogs,
And hear the Cochon Chinois braying.

The warm winds kiss me on the cheek,
And sigh as softly as a maiden;
From out the odoriferous thyme they come
With scents of yon distillery laden.

All nature sings: my own full heart
Now to be silent could not bear it;
I sweetly sing—so sweet, indeed,
I am obliged to stop and hear it.

Yea, when soft Spring comes up our way,
And early leaves begin to quicken,
I feel as soft as velvet, and
As tender as a young spring chicken.

Ah, Spring! here let me sing thy praise!
Hark, while my tuneful lyre I'm stringing!
I'll sound thy praises o'er the world,
And—but my dinner-bell is ringing!

The Hidden Letter.

A LOUISIANA STORY, FOUNDED ON FACT.

BY LAUNCE PONTZ.

A young man, with a gun in his hand, was wandering through the deep forests of Louisiana, listening to the notes of a rare and distant bird, which he was following and had been following all day. At last the elusive notes ceased, and Louis Duroc realized that the specimen he had fondly hoped to add to his collection had escaped him for the time.

With much vexation, the youth sat down to rest, for he was tired with his long tramp, and melting with the intense heat. Around him the solemn cypresses and live-oaks, draped with moss, stood silent as if carved in stone, for not a breath of wind disturbed the stillness, and the quivering air was shimmering with heat.

So that it was no wonder that Louis Duroc, tired out with his tramp, felt drowsy in the dim shadows of the forest, and fell asleep.

When he awoke it was late in the afternoon, and a breeze had sprung up. The birds were singing once more in the branches, and again he recognized the note of the one he was seeking.

Starting hastily up and rubbing his eyes, he heard a rapid step approaching through the forest, and sunk down again behind the tree, with a vague notion of seeing who it was, himself unseen.

The fluttering robes of a female coming through the forest rewarded his gaze, and he beheld a young girl, a dark creole beauty, with hair and eyes of intense blackness, coming straight toward him.

"Sacre!" muttered Duroc, "yonder's a pretty creature. But what does she want alone in the woods?"

As if to answer the question, the girl stopped under a splendid magnolia tree, and raised her hand, holding something white, which she deposited in a little hollow near one of the lower boughs, which might have escaped the eye of any one else. Then she stood there a moment, the afternoon sun shining on her white robes and fluttering mantle, and Duroc saw her look at her watch, with an air of vexation.

"He is late, he is late," she said aloud. "Oh, why does he tarry?"

"Parbleu! he has had taste," muttered Duroc. "I would I were he, mademoiselle. I would not tarry so long."

Then he saw the girl withdraw her hand and give one long, searching, lingering look all round. She sighed deeply.

"Alas, why am I doomed to love by stealth," she said. "I can not even wait, for I shall be missed. Farewell, dearest Louis, and God keep you from danger to-night."

Duroc saw her turn away and depart toward the distant town, and stole gently after her, for he was a Frenchman, and loved intrigue. But for all that he lost sight of her.

The violins were rising in the sweet, exultant strains of a delicious waltz, and the spacious ball-rooms of Madame Moccuard were crowded with the beauty and fashion of New Orleans.

The hostess was in the act of introducing a newly-arrived gentleman to a pretty partner, when the gentleman started slightly, and his eyes, with inconceivable inattention, wandered from the lady in question to another sitting beside her.

Then he recovered himself, stammered an apology, and Louis Duroc led out Mademoiselle Angeline Franchere to the waltz he had solicited. But even while he was waltzing and chatting with the fair Angeline, his eyes never ceased to turn to the other at intervals, for Louis Duroc beheld once more the mysterious unknown of the forest that he had seen six months before, and never since.

Before the evening was out, he managed to get an introduction to her, and found himself, despite what he had seen long ago, desperately in love with Coralie Franchere, who, on her part, seemed by no means loath to encourage the handsome young planter. He called next day, and again, and again, and before long was regarded as the accepted suitor of Coralie; and yet not a word had he heard from any of the family that the young lady had ever been engaged before in the meshes of love.

So that Louis was puzzled, and, in an evil hour, resolved to ask.

"And so you will not tell me, Coralie of my heart, to whom you wrote that letter?"

"I will not, Louis. You have no right to ask."

"Not as your betrothed lover?"

"Not even then. You know I love you, and no other."

"I am not so sure of that. You spoke differently when I overheard you in the forest."

Coralie did not blush. She turned pale, and her eyes flashed.

"Then you were eavesdropping, monsieur, and have no right to ask."

"Be it so. I may be foolish and jealous, Coralie, but I know this—I love you too well to share your love with another, whoever he may be. When you tell me, I will believe you. Till you do, we are strangers. I might have opened the letter, and you be no wiser. I was a gentleman, and am still too proud to accept half a heart. Farewell."

"Farewell, monsieur."

And Duroc was gone, while Coralie buried her face in her hands and murmured, amid her sobs:

"Oh, Louis, Louis, what have I not given up to save you from danger? He will never come back."

Two years had passed away, and Louis Duroc, always gloomy and reserved, remembering the many charms of Coralie, and the mysterious way in which he had first met her, was sitting alone by the fire in his dreary bachelor chambers in New York, listening to the winter storm without, and wondering whether he had not done foolishly in quarreling with Coralie. Buried in gloomy thought, he was startled by the entrance of his servant, who handed him a card bearing the name, "LOUIS FRANCHERE."

"The gentleman wishes to see monsieur, on a matter of importance."

Duroc started at the name and message. "Show him up," he said, hurriedly.

In a few moments a youth of less than twenty, with a striking likeness to Coralie, entered the room, declined by a sign the proffered seat, and dashed headlong into his business, with all the impetuosity of a French creole.

"Monsieur, I am the unhappy brother of Coralie Franchere, and have come to tell you she is dying."

"Dying?" Duroc felt an icy thrill run through his heart.

"Yes, monsieur, dying, and it is all my fault. Listen. Three years ago, I killed a fellow student in a quarrel in a heat of passion, and, fearing the law, fled to the woods to hide. My beloved sister, Coralie, was the only person who knew of my retreat, and she it was who brought me food and money and helped me to escape. Fearing to be tracked if she went to the same place too often, she used to hide the supplies at different spots daily, but always left a letter with information in the hollow tree, where you saw her hide it. That day, monsieur, I saw you, and hid, trembling lest you should find and read the letter. But you did not touch it. I thanked God, and opened it. It contained money and the means for flight. So that I left the country. You need not wonder that my name was never mentioned at home. Coralie was my only friend. The rest believed me guilty of murder, and were only glad I had fled to escape the disgrace of a public trial. Six months ago, monsieur, I met one of the men

who saw the whole affair, and learned that he and other witnesses were prepared to clear me of every thing except excusable homicide. I wrote to Coralie, and learned all that had happened. In fine, monsieur, I went home, stood my trial, and was acquitted. And then, too late, I learned how Coralie and you had parted, on account of poor unhappy me, and found my sister pale, ill, may almost dying. Monsieur, you have a good face, and I am young and foolish. Do not think ill of me for saying this—but must Coralie die?"

"No, by all my hopes of heaven," said Duroc, warmly.

And she did not, for the two Louises hastened to New Orleans, and cleared up forever, with a wedding, the mystery of the HIDDEN LETTER.

True Love Match.

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

It was not a reception—it was too late in the season for that. There were June dusts in the city streets, and country-grown, blooming late June roses on the flower-vendors' stands. Mrs. Vandemarke, of Regent square, would never be guilty of a reception in June at her city house.

Simply a select informal gathering she announced it, meant to relieve the tedium of the last fortnight in town, for Mrs. Vandemarke was too fond of sensations, and too well used to the expectant flutter which would greet her advent among the crowds at the sea-side resorts, to rush away with the first opening of the season. This night the movable palace in Regent square was ablaze, and some three-score couples drifting through its spacious rooms, all noted characters, celebrities in some degree in their varying spheres, some of whom, like their hostess, had not quitted town, while others had returned for this very informal occasion.

Mrs. Vandemarke's delightful social reunions were of too much note to be easily missed.

Aline Winter, on Herrindon's arm, floated with the human tide through the decorated rooms. She was quite unused to such splendor; it seemed like fairy-land opened to her bewil-

dered gaze. The air was heavy with delicious odors; a mellow harmony passed from under the sweep of skilled fingers; the sheen of silks and gleam of jewels flashed back the glittering lights; fair women and brave men were on every side, and identifying each with some name long familiar through established reputation, it is little wonder that Aline's heart beat faster, and she fairly held her breath in awe at the unaccustomed grandeur and justly-famed company.

Herrindon looked down at her with a smile. She was a tall, slim girl with a thin pale face, relieved from actual plainness by her large, wistful dark eyes, and dewy scarlet lips. Now there was a flame of wavering color in her cheeks and an unwonted luster in her eyes which made her very fair to look upon.

"If she would always look like that, I'd not regret my sacrifice, by Jove," thought Herrindon. He had never quite reconciled himself to the necessity which had fettered him by the vows of a betrothal to this girl by his side.

He was too much a slave to sensuous beauty, too ardent an admirer of perfect ripened womanhood, too appreciative of bright coloring, nonchalant ease and brilliant display, to recognize the great possibilities which lay dormant in this quiet Miss Winter, who was almost painfully shy and constrained. She was only seventeen, and the world which absorbed him was an unsolved enigma to her.

"What do you think of it all?" he asked, presently.

She drew a quivering breath, and her glance swept the vista of the wide opening rooms, filled without being thronged, and then answered him:

"It is like a scene invoked by the Genii. I would scarcely be surprised if it should all melt away before my very eyes. I have dreamed of enchanted palaces, and this is like the work of some modern Haroun Al Raschid."

Herrindon laughed and sighed in the same breath. Her enthusiasm amused him, and for a moment he envied her the guileless simplicity which could take such delight in that which was to him a common experience.

"The Haroun Al Raschid, who is responsible for all the magnificent outlay, is a very gruff bear on 'Change,'" he said. "This sort of thing

me, my dear Miss Winter, if I carry off your escort for a little business talk? I'll find a substitute for him first. See, that is my husband, but he is dull, so I will not inflict him upon you. Ah, Senator Howe—the very man."

Aline felt a thrill of aversion for the beautiful and undoubtedly talented woman who could speak so slightly of the man who was her husband. It was an article in the girl's creed that the marital relationship should be sacredly observed even though rashly entered into, and she could not doubt that this marriage was most incongruous when she looked upon Mr. St. Leon's insignificant proportions, and weak, expressionless features.

Senator Howe offered his arm for a promenade through the rooms, and soon Aline found herself glancing up at him shyly, with her first feeling of awe at so much dignity melting into admiration of his friendly tact, and discovered sympathy of opinion which placed her quite at ease. By the time they concluded the tour of the richly furnished apartments, Aline was talking with a grace, motive and fluency, Herrindon had never called forth.

"Do you know that you are not a stranger to me?" he asked. "I have watched for 'Aline' since 'Lost' went the rounds of the magazines."

A flush of gratified surprise swept over her face, for she, too, occupied a new-found place in the literary world, but deemed herself unnoticed amid hosts of brighter stars. This first need of praise from a man like her companion was inexpressibly sweet and thrilling.

While they stood discussing the merits of popular authors, a waiter pushed his way through the crowd and paused before them.

"A letter for Miss Winter," he announced.

She held it irresolutely, with an undefined foreboding, and a troubled light creeping into her eyes.

"Let me take you into the conservatory and bring you an ice while you read it. It must be important, I think."

He found her a place close to one of the colored lamps, which dispensed their softened glow through the alleys of greenery, starred with innumerable, odoriferous blossoms. She tore open the envelope when he had gone, and read in a half-dozen lines that the large fortune she had inherited was swept utterly away.



"He is too late! He is too late!" she said, aloud.

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With an impulse wild enough to have become a younger man, he bent over her.

"If you will let me spare you the humiliation that you dread, Aline. Can you trust me?—will you marry me, and let me care for you, as it will be my pride to do?"

He was forty-seven and she was seventeen, but, before they left the place, he had reasoned her scruples away, quite confident that time would assuage the pain of her wounded spirit, and incline her heart to him.

Three years later. A reception at the Vandemarke mansion, and a fashionable host gathered there.

Herrindon and his wife. "said one of two gentlemen who were criticising the assembly. 'She doesn't wear well, and people say that domestic troubles are ageing her fast. It's just retribution, if true; there was scandal before her first husband died, and Herrindon married her three months after. She was Mrs. St. Leon, you know.'

"Who promised literary success once, and failed in securing it?—I remember. But, tell me, who is that splendid woman just entering now?"

"Mrs. Senator Howe, and her husband with her. That was a true love-match, though he is so much the older."

And Herrindon, comparing Aline, in her developed loveliness, with the wife who is already growing haggard and faded, curses the infatuation which led him to relinquish her so willingly.

But Aline is happy beyond comparison in the peace of her husband's love and home.

Beat Time's Notes.

THE worst kind of flies is time-flies.

Oh, woman, in thine hour of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to squeeze!

MANY a proof-reader becomes proof-ane, easily.

MEN who dissipate are liable to have dizzy-pates.

CAN every girl who has a beau be said to be beautiful?

AN untruthful man is a boil on the surface of humanity.

WORDS fitly spoken will be remembered, also words spoken fitfully.

PUSH forward. If you fall down, go right ahead, and don't wait to get up.

WHEN I have any business to transact with a friend, I always go after dinner—also.

THE distiller sung of his inspector, "His bright smile haunts me still."

WHEN a man threatens to "throw a shade over your eye it would be the best to keep shady."

CAN any man who never made a speech be said to be speechless?

MAN kneels before a woman in order to make a neesy conquest.

GIRLS as a general thing don't object having a mustache on their lips—for a short time.

A BEAUTIFUL woman should wear no frown on the face, but should frown on the frown.

A FELLOW lately ran so fast that he ran away from himself. He never got back.

RASH men are no more prone to be rational than the sparks on a railroad train are to fly upward.

I THINK I got old by reading ancient history, and living so much in the good old days, far back.

If a young lady persists in saying "No," you had better give it up, young man, for ten to one you will never get her by her nose.

THOSE diminished umbrellas you can almost see in women's hands are the last things that will ever parry-sol.

Wives of other men remind us
We can make our wives sublime,
In departing, to leave behind us
New prizes and the motive to buy 'em.

You should learn to look over your neighbor's faults; my neighbor's faults are piled so high that I can't look over them if I stand on tip-toe.

WHEN my father caught me chewing tobacco, he would tap my shoulders so gently with a cow-hide, that it nearly killed me to open my mouth for a week to put another chew in.

THE first thing I ever tried to steal, when I was a boy, was honey out of a hive. It is one of the best things to begin that business on that I know of; it's so discouraging.

I PUT some business in a lawyer's hands; when I saw him again I found he had been working two weeks on his bill of costs and hadn't begun the case yet.

THE soil is so good in Illinois that bald-headed people receive a new crop of hair in a few weeks; new teeth grow out, and old clothes are soon covered with new nap.

WHEN any one out West relates a circumstance that takes more than two men to believe, they interrupt him by asking if he has a photograph of the occurrence.

A DOWN-TOWN father who was whipping his young hopeless, said, "My son, I was obliged to whip you for your own good." "Yes, but father, you lick me bad."

WHEN I look over the almanacs for 1873, I am as sad as a loaf of bread to find that my birthday occurs once in every one of them this year. I will be set several years forward on that anniversary.

I USED to be so strong that I could throw myself up and catch myself in my hands, walk clear out on my arm, and put myself under my arm, and walk off without asking odds of anybody.

I AM trying to raise a company to extend the Suez Canal across the Mediterranean Sea, and another to build a Mammoth ship so large that one end will touch at New York, and the other at Liverpool, so people can walk across.

ABOUT one of the worst things to pay debts with is money, it is so inconvenient. I do wish they would invent some other kind of collateral for the purpose—something a little cheaper than money. I am dreadfully in for a reform in this matter.